

A TREATISE
of the Excellencie of a

Christian man, and howe he
may be knowen.

Written in French by Master Peter de
La Place, one of the Kings Counsel, and
chiefe President of his Court of
Aides in Paris,

Whereunto is adioyned a brieve descrip-
tion of the life and death of the sayd Au-
thour, to the end that euerie one may
knowe what he was.

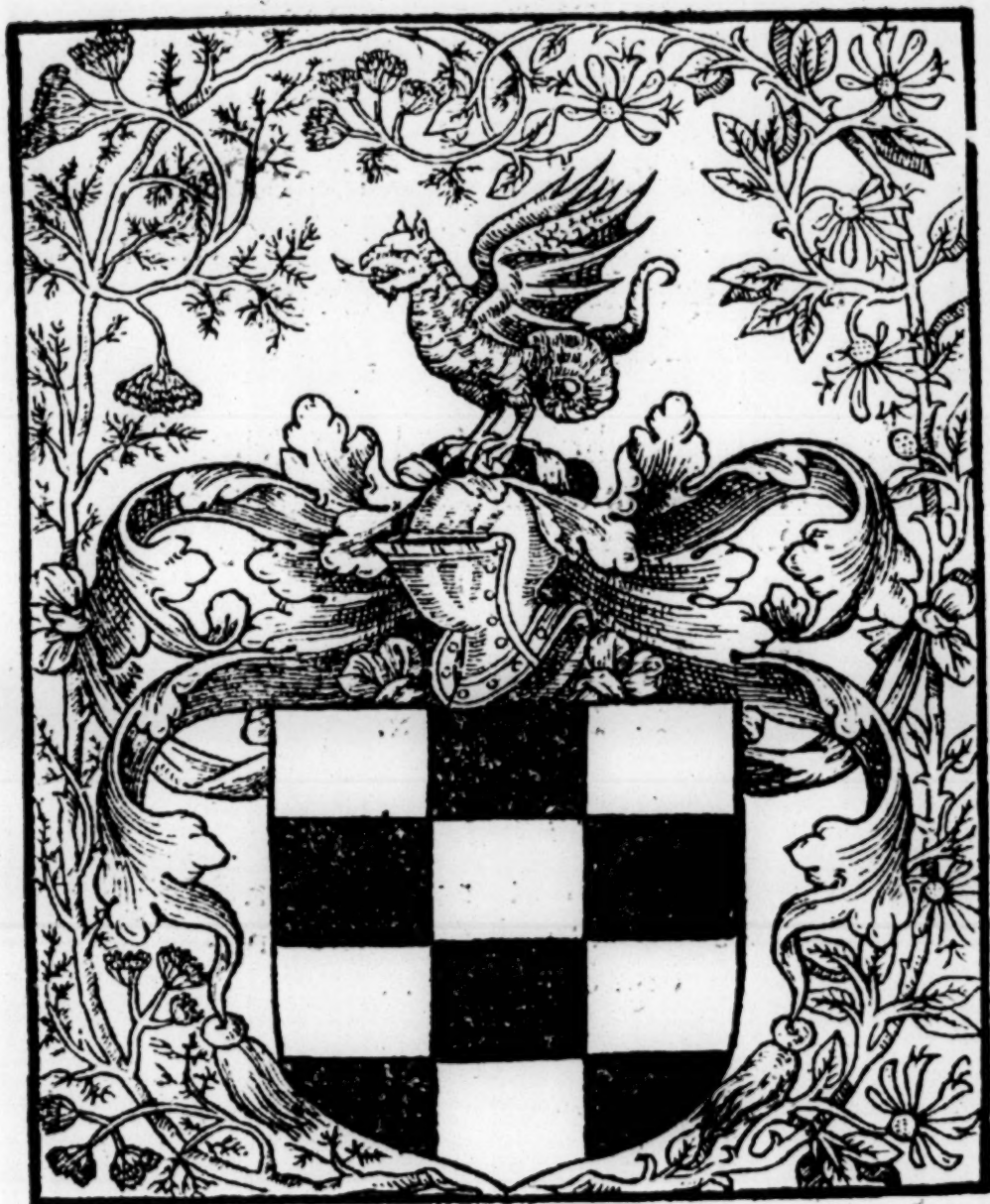
Translated into English by
L. T O M S O N.

MATTH. V.

Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righ-
teousnes sake: for theirs is the king-
dome of heauen.

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Christopher Barkar, dwelling in Parer
noster Rowe at the signe of the
Tygres head.

ANNO. 1577.



49-6-11-49.



¶ *To the right worshipfull*

Mistres Vrsula Walsingham,

grace mercie and peace from

God the Father and from the Lord

Iesus Christ.



According as your Worships pleasure was, I haue perused this booke, and as wynde and weather woulde serue for passage, haue brought it out of France into England: The cause of your liking, can not be misliked of any: and the iudgement of the right honourable my Master, may stande as most grounded in trueth and iustice, whereby hee sentenced him not only to be of the Religio of Christ, but also truely a religious Christian. For surely, if I be not deceiued in iudgement, who so shall reade this booke, shall finde there was a Christe in the man, and such a Christ, as made him in deede a Christian, not for a daye or two, not for fayre and calme weather onely, but from the first beginning of his entrance into the knowledge of God, to his very last breath, in most sharpe and stormie tempestes, as witnesseth his happie and blessed martyrdom, in that most horrible slaughter of the Sainctes of God, on Barthelmewes daye in Paris that wicked murderesse of Gods people, against whome their innocent blood cryeth to God for vengeance against the daye of wrath. As he felt, so he wrote, and his feeling was with such spirituall vnderstanding, as that we may well see, he was

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one of them of whome hee wrote , and by so well knowing him selfe to his euerlasting comfort , gaue vs a waye to knowe our selues for the ioyous assurance of our saluation . The greatest comfort we haue, is to knowe that we are of the citie of God, and who so would honour vs the most , could not better perfourme it to our liking , then to assure vs we are the childre of that heauēly Father, brought into that honour and dignitie , by Christ that dyed for vs, and gaue him selfe for vs , and in whome we dwell, and he in vs, if we deceiue not our selues . As for the cōfort we might reape, by being made men, and not beastes, though it be great, & God is therefore greatly to be magnified , yet considering what God did for vs , & what we haue done against him, where he set vs by grace , and where we finde our selues through sinne and rebellion , we haue cause rather to sorowe , then to ioye , of heauines then of comfort: and in that respect , the veriest varlet & caitif that goeth vpon the earth hath as much to triumphe in, as hath the best man of God, the dearest childe of our heauēly Father. For they are mē, as well as we, made to the image of God as well as we, haue as great light in them of natural reason & vnderstāding, as we, witnes the Heathē that neuer knewe God, no worse sinners in Adam thē we, but we as bad as they , both of vs for our sinne and rebellion against him in that man Adam iustly blinded, iustly condemned. This the blind wyse Philosopher did not see , and this the obstinate Pelagian Papist at this day will not acknowledge, and therefore they bothe lifte vp their heeles against God, haue wicked thoughtes , and speake blasphemous wordes against heauen , and against their owne saluation.

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saluation. And because this prerogative ouer other creatures, but equalitie of and in mankinde, had not that in it, that might in deede comfort the heart of man, but rather cast him downe, his minde and purpose was to lay forth the other to vs, which is proper to vs, I saye proper to vs, that are of the household of faith, of the common wealth of Israel, citizens of heauen, felowe heires with Christ, the children of God: and I saye proper, because the Heathen and Barbarians, be they neuer so wyse, the Pelagians and Papistes, be they neuer so superstitiously deuoute, haue neither part nor portion in it. And this is the preeminence, not to be called, but to be a Christian, which whosoever feelth in hym selfe with a right feeling of true vnderstanding, which neither of the two before named hath (for the one fighteth against the name of Christ, the other can not abide to heare of any certaine persuation and assurance of the conscience, that it is beloued of God, and that God is without doubt our Father,) hath the greatest preeminence that man can haue vpon earth, and the greatest ioye and comfort that can be felt by man. All of vs at this day, in this part of the world, do ioye in this name, Christian, and it is taken for the greatest dishonour that can be done to man, to saye he is no Christian: And yet sure it is, that euery man is not a Christian, that is called a Christian, euery man is not a Christian that is Christened, not euery one that sayeth Lord Lord, shal enter into the kingdom of heauen, no more then euery one that was circumcised, was a true Iewe, or all that descended of the race of Abraham, were true children to Abraham. There was amongst them Ismael, who per-

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secuted his brother, and yet was he circumcised: there was Esau, whom the Lord hated, and yet was he circumcised: So are there heretikes amongst vs, Christened, and yet not Christians, for neither the cutting of of a piece of skinne in them, did make them true Israelites, neither dipping in a litle water, maketh these true Christians. Both of these standeth in the spirit, not in the letter, in the inward worke by grace and that of God, not in the outwarde worke of man. So that he that hath this honorable name, to be called a Christiā, hath more cause to tremble then to reioyce, vnlesse hee haue a sure testimonie both within and without, that he is in deede a Christiā: for the abuse of Gods name can auaille man nothing at all, nay it furthereth & increaseth his condemnation, as a great credit committed to a seruant, and abused by that seruant, procureth greater displeasure. Howe we shall come to the knowledge of this preeminence and excellencie, which is in vs, this booke sheweth, and because it is so plainely and shortely set forth, I will not stande here to make any discourse of it vnto your worship, only I most humbly beseeche you to reade the booke it selfe, and there shall you finde it so well layd forth, as shalbe to your contentment and comfort. I could very willingly haue bene content to haue entred somewhat into the matter, but I feare I should haue ouerslipped my selfe, for I must needes confesse of my selfe, and to the glorie God, I speake it, that I can easelier enter into it, then come forth, so great comfort I receiue of the doctrine, which is the chiefeest part of the ioye of my saluation. Were it not that I had good assurance, & feeling of these markes which he setteth down, and
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are in deede the true markes of our saluation, both in vs and to vs, that we are saued, I should despayre rather then hope, and bende my self wholly against God, then euer be subiect or submit my self to God. And therefore so oft as euer I enter into consideration of the wicked doctrines, which the reprobate and cōdemned Church of Antichrist, giueth out & teacheth, I finde none so detestable as this point, that laboureth to take away from vs all perswasion of Gods loue towardes vs, and of our most sure and certaine redemption by the blood of Christ. They cal it a presumptuous doctrine, a desperat doctrine, a doctrine y^e leadeth mā to al kinde of dissolutenes, an enemie to godlines of life & deuotiō, a furtherer of al sensualitie, al lust, all wickednes and rebellion against god. Though we are taught by the scripture, that none can beleue but such as are appointed to saluation, and none can receiue Christ, and beleue in his name, but they which haue this prerogatiue giuen thē, to be sonnes of God: though the Apostle say, Knowe ye not that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you: and agayne, The Temple of God is holy, which Temple you are: though Christ him self say, Reioyce that your names are written in the booke of life: and, Of those whom my Father hath giuen me, I will not leese one: yet cease they not against so manifest trueths of the Spirit of God, and witnes of the Sonne of God, yea and euident speeches of God him selfe, to disgorge their blasphemies tending to the subuersion of soules, because they enuie at other mens saluation, not passing, as seemeth by their doctrine, for their owne, though I iudge them not. Is it a presumption for a Christian man to say as Christ hath commaunded vs and taught vs to

A iiij. say,

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say, Our Father which art in heauen? Or may I say, Our father, in doubt, whether he be so or no? No mā can call God his Father, but in faith, and faith is nothing but an vndoubted perswasion that we are beloued of God in Christ, beloued as childré, because he gaue his Sonne for vs, because he the righteous, dyed for me the vnrighteous, wherby as he became a sinner, by setting him selfe in my place, so do I become righteous, in that that God setteth me in his place: And because our condition and state is such with God, Iesus Christ our Sauour willed vs in praying, to pray thus, Our Father. For if this grouūd go not before, we are lyers in so praying, Nay we blaspheme him in so praying, for he will not be called Father of the reprobate, no more then he will accept the sacrifice of the wicked, whereof hee sayeth by his Prophet, that it is an abomination to him, for our prayers are sacrifices, and if they be the prayers of his children, then are they sweete smelling sacrifices: but if they be the prayers of the wicked and reprobate, then are they an abomination to the Lord. Do we not euery one of vs, in the Confession of our sayth, say, I belecue in God the Father? what do we lye, when we say so? Or must we doubt when we say so? Wel this is the doctrine of the enemies of God, the Papistes, who say, it is presumption for any man to saye that he is saued. Then I say, it is presumption for any man to say, that he is the childe of God: then is it presumption for any man to saye, that God is our Father: then is it presumption for any man to saye that he is a Christian: then is it presumption for any man to say in a good and true faith, I belecue in God. And so by this meanes shall the whole Catholike Church be
condem-

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condemned for charging vs to saye so : then is Christ a lyer, and a master of heresies in teaching vs to praye so : then do we all wickedly to call and professe our selues Christians with such confidence as we do . And seeing their profession and doctrine is so, that no man can assuredly saye that God is his Father, let them set it downe in flat termes, as they meane it, and let the style of the Cōfession of sayth, and the Lords prayer go as their doctrine is, after this sorte, I doubt in God the Father almightie, I doubt in Iesus Christ, I doubt in the holy Ghost, and if thou which art in heauen be our Father, hallowed be thy name, and so forth . What a diuelish doctrine is this ? and yet it is the doctrine of the church of Rome : what a desperate doctrine is it ? and yet it is the doctrine that we must confesse to be true, or els we be heretikes, we must be burned, we must be condemned . Christians I saye, must be condemned, because they saye they are Christians, for it is nothing els wee saye : wee saye wee are the children of God, that is an heresie, say they, and yet they will graūt vs to be Christiāns. A strange kinde of Christiā, that hath not the Spirit of Christ, and if we haue the Spirit of Christ, are we not Children ? The Apostle teacheth vs all this : why then, what is it els to say, we are Christians, then to saye, we are the childre of God ? and is there any childe of God that is not saued ? Paul sayeth, if sonnes, then heires, heires of the kingdome, yea felowe heires with Christ. So then it is no more presumption to say, I am saued, then to saye, I am the childe of God : neyther any more presumption to saye, I am the childe of God, then to saye, I am a Christian . Oh but say they, this doctrine maketh men despe-

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desperate: for if they stande vpon those termes once, that they are saued, they wil care no more for good workes, they will abandon them selues to all kinde of sinne. In deede they say, as they feele, for if they felt what it were to haue this persuation and ground, they would know, that as they are freed frō sinne, so are they to liue in righteousness: The true Christian and childe of God, is more fearefull to sinne, because he loueth God, and is beloued of God, then all the wicked are for feare of punishment. He knoweth and is persuated, that as he is dead with Christ, so must he rise againe with Christ in newnes of life, to liue after the Spirit, not after the fleshe, and that God hath prepared his wayes to walke in, which are good workes. If the liues of all men were looked into, it would easely appeare, where were the greatest abundance of sinne, whether in the true Christian who is a witnes of the trueth of this doctrine, or in the enemy of trueth, which can not abide this doctrine. And why can he not abyde this doctrine? because he can not abyde to heare of the adoption of God, howe God hath adopted and taken vs to bee his sonnes in Christe before the foundation of the worlde was layed. And why so? Because they go about to set vp their owne righteousness, and therefore will not be subiect to the righteousness of God. If we do wel, because we are the children of God, and if we beleue, because we were appointed to saluation, then is it not our wel doing that maketh vs to be Gods children: then are we not appointed to saluation, because we beleue: then are all their merites gone, then is all their fat in the fyre. A Heathen, a Pharisee, and a Papist, is no bodie vnlesse he may merite, vnlesse

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vnlesse God may be bounde to him, and not he to God: he will not take the kingdome of heauen of gift, he will haue it of duetie, and that is no God a mercie to him. This is the very point of the matter, iudge now which is the presumptuous doctrine, either the heathenish Pharisaicall papistrie, or the trueth of the Gospel. But as I sayd, I can more easely enter into the matter, then get out of it, the grosse-nes of their heresie is so notorious and brutishe, the trueth of our doctrine is so plaine and riche, that I can not conteine my selfe, if I should folow my self, I will therefore surcease and leaue your worship to the reading of the worke it selfe, which shalbe sufficient to instructe you in the waye of his trueth, and arme you against the assaultes of Satan by these his instrumentes. The Lord by his holy Spirit worke those two effectes in you, for this present, so true & comfortable doctrine: and further leade you into all trueth, as he is the God of trueth, that in the day of the Lord Iesus, you may be founde to haue walked without stumbling in whatsoeuer hee hath thought necessarie to reueile vnto you for your saluation. 15. Sept. 1576.

*Your worships humbly at com-
mandemens L. T.*

A briefe collection of the
chiefest points of the life of Master Peter
de la Place, while he liued Counsellor to
the French King, and chiefe President in
his Court of Aydes, at Paris: set
forth by P. de Farnace.

 Though, to iudge aright of any
worke, we haue to consider ra-
ther what the thing is in it self,
then to stande much vpon the
authour of it, because, as trueth
is, the opinions wherwith we are before pos-
sessed, whether they be with or against the
persons, stay vs from iudging sincerely of
their doings: yet notwithstanding it is a cō-
mendable custome, not onely to set mens
names before their bookes, but also to set
downe what men they were, to the ende the
reader may be the better prepared to taste of
the fruiet when he shal once vnderstand what
tree did beare it: for it is to be thought, that
the fruiet wilbe like the tree that bare it. And
therefore, seeing this worke came to mine
handes, I was so bolde to put forth this short,
but yet most true discours of the lyfe and
death of the worthe man that made it: be-
ing otherwys thus minded, though this oc-
casion

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casion had not fallen out, that it were an iniurie to posteritie to suffer diuers thinges Iye buried vnder silence which befell him in his lyfe tyme, and are woorthie perpetuall memorie.

Therefore, to beginne at his byrth, Master Peter de la Place, an Angoulesmian bozne, was so well trayned vp in learning, euen from a chylde, that he onely of all his brethren resolved with him selfe to followe the studie of the Lawes, wherein he profited so marueylously, that before hee was two and twentie yeres olde, hee made a commentatie vpon the title of Actions: and about the same tyme began to be a common pleader in the Parliament of Paris, where he gotte him great commendation and prayse for excellencie of witte and eloquence in pleading, and especially for singular vprightnes of conscience. For which cause also, the deceased King Francis the great, did him this honour to chuse him for his Aduocate and Antourney in his Court of Aydes in Paris. In which office he behaued him selfe so well, that no man is able to bereue hym of this commendation, that hee kept his handes continually cleane from briberie, and neuer dyd any thing against his office,
either

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either for vnbrideled ambition or couetousnes. King Henrie the last, hauing sufficient testimonie of his good and vpright bearing of himselfe, in steade of continuing him in this office, chose him amongst a number of other to be his President in the sayd Court of Aides. and whilest he was in this office, it pleased God to call him to knowe him, about the yere 1554, after a strange fashion.

About twentie yeres before, whilest hee was a student at Poictiers, it pleased God to make him see Master Iohn Caluine, passing then that way with the Archbysshop of Tillet, whome he was content to heare speaking honourably of the knowledge of God in generall, but when he spake of the pure seruice of God, he made a staye there, as one very zelous of that religion wherein he had bene carefully brought vp. Yet so it was, that euen from that daye, there remayned some scruple in his conscience, that it myght well be, he might be deceiued, and that his mynde ran vpon often times as he confessed afterwarde: which was as you would saye, a preparatiue to nourish this litle seede, vntill it came to budde forth and spring, at such time as God had appointed it.

After

After this it fell out on a daye , that standing at his doore, there came a certaine stranger to him , by a wonderfull prouidence of God, whom he knewe not , but seeing him to be a man of some qualitie, and one that wanted reliefe in his extreme pouertie , turned to him very humbly , and made him a long discourse in excellent Latin vpon the cause of his miserie . And finding him to be a man well qualified , caused him to come in euen into his studie , to feele him the better to the bottome at his leasure. Then this pooze mā, as one sent from God , began to discyfer out frankly vnto him all the abuses of the Popishe Church, and to shewe hym the true and onely waye to serue God . And after he had heard him patiently , he rewarded him , and prayed him notwithstanding very earnestly to come no more to him , so afraid he was of the fyers which were prepared against them which were suspected the lest that might be, for the doctrine of the Gospel : as in deede this pooze stranger, not long after, was tried in the foznace at Paris.

But after this, Peter de la Place , left not turning both the Scriptures and al the olde fathers, euen to the very scholemen , to finde some meanes if it were possible, to take away
this

this scruple which troubled his minde day & night. By this meanes in short space, God touched his heart, and opened his eyes, and caused him to behold the light of the Gospel, in so much as after y^e death of Kyng Francis the second, he declared him selfe openly to be of their number that made profession of the reformed Religion. And about that time put forth a treatise concerning our Calling, to King Charles the ninth that dead is, and shortly after put forth an other treatise in printe, touching the right vse of Moral Philosophie, with the doctrine of Christ.

So that when the troubles encreased, for his owne safetie, hee departed from Paris, and withdrew himselfe to an house of his in Picardie: where all the tyme of the troubles hee gaue hym selfe wholly to the studie of Diuinitie, as the onely and true Philosophie, (sayde hee) which is able to minister to man true ioye and comfort in his griefes and miseries: and vsed oftentimes to exhorde his familie to the feare of God, and exercised them in prayers. And some part of his tyme also he gaue to write howe matters of Religion and the comon wealth passed, diuers pieces whereof, vnwares to him were imprinted, Anno 1565.

When

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When these warres were ended, in the yere 62, he went and presented him selfe to the King, to purge him selfe of manie false bzuites which certaine euill willers had cast out of him in the warre time: at what time, after that his Maiestie was satisfied with his answers for his defence, finding y^e late Prince of Conde that dead is, in the Court, hee went and did his duetie to him: who, for his part, receiued him so courteously, that from that instant, he gaue him the charge, & made him ouerscer of all his houlholde affaires, which he tooke in so good part, that in all matters that concerned his honour, he spared neither goods, nor children, nor him self, so carefull he was of his seruice.

Fiue yeres after, when the troubles began afreshe, he withdrew him selfe againe, from Paris to the Castell of Ve in Valois, which beloged to his nephewes, by the right of Mistres Ragonde Luillier his wyfe, to whom he was at that instant, tutor. During the time of these warres, he suffered great persecutions: but neither the losse of his office, nor the sale of his moueable goodes, nor the leasing vpon his vnmoueable, troubled or disquieted him so much, as the discourtesies did which hee receiued at their handes, of

B i. whom

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whome he ought in courtiesie haue reaped greate hope of helpe, as of them that were nerest to him in blood, amongst all which, I can not let passe one vnspoken of, who shewed him selfe very barbarous and discourteous, and is a Counseler of the Court, (howe be it, I am content to concele his name) and did once not onely knowe the trueth of the Gospel, but that more is, made open profession of it, but afterwardes forgat himselfe so farre y he played as lewde a touch as might be with the saide La Place his kinsman. For where as he professed the religion, yea and that after the first troubles, perceiuing that God proued his children somewhat sharply, he reuolted by and by, and seeing himselfe in some danger by threates cast out against the that had bene of the religion, to auoyde all suspicion of grief that he might conceiue for his reuolte, or of desire to returne to the companie of good men, he purposed with himselfe to commit some notozious acte, as he forthwith performed it in slandering and giuing forth the worst speaches he coulde, against this Peter de la Place, taking this occasion, which I will tell you, to make some shewe of his doing.

Peter de la Place, was tutour to his nephewes,

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phewes, which were children to this Coun-
sellers wife, and had, as I saide before, with-
drawen himself to a certaine castel of theirs.
Hereupon this Counseler ceased not by way
of sondrie slanderous requestes and suppli-
cations, to forge and put into the heads of
the Court of parlement a thousand lewde
and wicked practises and slanderous repro-
ches: in so much as he caused this saide La
Place, while hee was absent and knewe no-
thing of these matters, not onely to be dis-
charged of the office of his tutorship, to his
great reproche, but also gate forth a com-
mission to get him possession of the sayde ca-
stell, and to arreste the saide La Place. Which
no doubt had bene executed in so unhappie
and troublesome a time, considering what
diligence hee caused Tanchou and his Ar-
chers to make, as if they had gone about
the taking of some thiefe and murderer: had
not God raised up a friend, who came a night
before and tolde him of the whole matter.
Whereupon though he were in a continuall
burning ague, yet he was constrained to saue
himselfe in the forest of Rez, which is hard
ioyning vpon the Castell, where hee light
vpon a stranger, that tooke him in, whereas
this Counseler not onely against all right of
kinred,

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kinred , but also contrarie to all humanitie sealed vpon his Castell , cast out the children of the said Place , and spoiled such goodes as he had left there : and beside all this barbarous vnkindnes , sent Tanchou and his archers to pursue him . Who by this meanes was constrayned to remayne in the forest as a vagabond a good sorte of dayes together, vntill at lengthe the Lorde of Bouchauane shewed him this courtiesie , to take him berie secretly into a litle chamber in his Castell of Couffy , where hee was constrayned to remaine fast shut vp , comforting himselfe in these his distresses and miseries with the reading of the holie scriptures , at what time he gaue him selfe to some deeper consideration of the excellencie of a Christian man , and to wyte this lytle treatise.

Afterwarde when it pleased G D D to giue his pooze Churche some breathing time , he returned home to his house , and though there were some resistance made against hym by one that in the tyme of the warre , had eurpyched him selfe with spoyle of his goodes , yet he reentred into the office of his Presidentship , and executed it without any reproche , being honoured of all good men,

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men, and feared of the wicked, until this cursed S. Barthlemewes day, the foure & twentie of August, the last day of a number of honest mens liues, yea and of the verie chiefe and flowres of France. And amongst the rest was this man De la Place most cruelly murdered, in maner as foloweth.

The xxiiii. day about sixe of the clocke in y^e morning, there came to his house one Captaine Michel by name, an harquebusier of Charles the ninth, whom he was the better content to receiue into his house, because he tooke him to bee one of the Kings Scottishthe garde, for many of them loued him very well, and offred their seruice to him oftentimes. When this Captaine Michel was thus entred into his house, armed with an harquebourse on his shoulder, and a pistoll at his gyrdell, and a table napkin about his left arme in token he was one of the murderers, the first wordes he spake were these, that the Duke of Guyse had by the Kings commandement slaine the Admiral, and many other noble mē of the religion: and because al the rest of the Huguenots, of what qualitie soeuer they were, were appointed to be murdered, he was come to this Gentlemans house La Place, to deliuer him out of this calamitie.

tie. But yet he would they should shewe him all the gold and siluer in the house.

Then this Gentleman De la Place, amazed at the proudenes of this man, that being but one in the house, and amongst ten or twelue persons, he durst vse such wordes, asked him if he knewe where he was, and whether there were a King or no. To whom this Captaine answered with othes, that seeing it was so, he should go with him to the King, and so he should knowe his pleasure. When this Gentleman La Place heard this, and misdouting that there was some great sedition in the towne, slipped out at a backdooze, thinking to saue him selfe in some of his neighbours houses. In the meane season most part of his seruants conueyed them selues away, and this Captaine hauing gotten about a thousand crownes, as he was departing was requested by Mistres Marets daughter to the same Gentleman to conduct her and Master Marets her husbände, to some Catholiques house, their friend, which he did.

After this, the said la Place, hauing bene refused at three houses, was cōstrained to come home to his owne, where he founde his wyfe verie desolate, and tormenting her selfe verie pitifully, both for feare lest this Captaine would

The life of the Authour.

would haue cast her sonne in lawe and her daughter into the water, and also for the present daunger she sawe her poore husbände and all her familie in. But this Gentleman la Place, strengthened with the spirit of God, and with marueilous constancie rebuked his wife sharpely, laying forth befoze her, howe patiently they had to receiue such afflictions at Gods handes: and so when he had a litle discoursed vpon the promises that God maketh to his childzen, he put her in good comfort.

Afterwarde he commanded his men seruants and mayde seruants that were left, to be called in, & as he vsed euery Sabbath day to make some kinde of exhortation to his familie, he gaue himselfe to prayer, and afterwarde began to reade a Chapter of Iob, and Master Caluins sermon vpon it, and made a short discourse vpon the iustice and mercie of God, who (saide he) as a good Father exerciseth his chosen people with diuers chastisements, to the ende they should not staye themselves vpon worldly things. He shewed them moreouer howe necessarie afflictions are for the Christians, and that neither the world, nor the deuill are able to hurt vs further, then it standeth with Gods good will.

The life of the Authour.

and pleasure to suffer them, and therefore we neede not feare their power which reacheth no further then to our bodie. And after this, he gaue him selfe to prayer againe, preparing him selfe and al his familie to suffer al kinde of torments, yea & death it selfe, rather then to do any thing against Gods glorie.

When he had ended his prayer, one cometh and telleth him that Master Senescay Prouist of the towne house and a number of Archers were at his gates, and commaunded them to open the gates in the Kings name, and said that he was come to garde La Places persone, & to keepe his house from spoyling by the multitude: vpon this occasion, this Gentleman la Place commaunded the gate to be opened, and so he came in and told him what slaughter there was made of the Huguenots throughout all the towne, and that by the Kings commandement, adding these wordes amongst the rest in Latin, that there should not one be left, that could pisse against a wall. Notwithstanding he had expresse commandement from his Maiestie to see there were no hurt done to him, but to bring him to the Loure, because he was desirous to be instructed by him of diuers matters touching them of the Religion, which
he

he had to deale in, and therfore that he should make him selfe ready to come to the King.

This Gentleman la Place answered, that he would thinke him self happy for euer, if before he departed out of this worlde, he might finde the meanes to giue the King an account of all his doings and behauiour. But for y^e time, considering what horrible slaughters were committed all the towne ouer, it woulde bee impossible for him to get to the Loure in safetie, without great and most euident dāger of his person, but he might wel assurance his Maiestie of his person, if it would please him to leaue such a nūber of Archers in his house, as he should thinke meete, untill the furie of the people were a litle appeased. Senescay graunted him his request, & left him one of his Lieutenāts, called Toute voye, and foure of his Archers.

Shortly after that Senescay was departed, the President Charon then Prouist of y^e Marchants of Paris came to the house, and after he had talked a whyle with him in secret, departed & left him foure of the towne Archers beside the Archers of Senescays companie. All the day after and the night following, was bestowed in stopping vp and ramparing the wayes into the house, and prouiding

ding pebbles and stones by into windowes, so that by this great and painefull watche there was some likelyhood, that these Archers were placed in the house for the safetie of La Places person, and to preserve his familie from that commō miserie that other felt, untill Senescay came backe the next daye following, about two of the clocke in the after noone and shewed him, that he had expresse & precise commaundement from the King, to bring him, without any further delay. This Gentleman LaPlace shewed him as before, what danger there was for him in the town, seeing that the self same morning, there was one of his neighbours houses sacked. Althys notwithstanding Senescay was earnest to the contrarie, saying that it was a common vse amongst y^e Huguenots to protest great humblenes, and say that they are the Kings most obedient seruants and subiects, but when it came to the point to obey the Kings cōmaundement, they shewed them selues very colde, and it seemed by them that they coulde in no wyse brooke it. And as for the danger, hee sayde it was for him to go to the Louure, Senescay answered him, that he would giue him a Captaine of Paris, which should be verie well knowen to all the people, to accom-

panie

panie him. Whyle Senescay was thus talking with him, a Captaine of Paris, called Pe-sou, and one of the chieftest cutthrotes came into this Gentlemans La Place his chamber, and offred to conduct him. La Place refused him verie earnestly, saying to Senescay, that he was one of the cruellest and wickedest mē in all the towne, and therefore desired him onely, seeing he could refuse no longer to go to the King that it would please him to go with him, whereto Senescay answered that by reason of other busines he had to do, hee could not go with him aboue fiftie paze.

Whereupon this Gentleman La Places wife, though she be a Gentlewoman on whō God hath bestowed many graces & blessings, yet notwithstanding the great loue she bare to her husband, caused her to fall downe prostrate before the sayde Senescay and beseeche him to accompanie her husband. But with that, this Gentleman La Place, who neuer shewed any token of an heart cast downe, began to take vp his wife, & repproue her, shewing her that it is not the arme of man which we must haue recourse vnto, but to G D D alone. Afterward turning him seife a side, he espied a crosse of paper in his eldest sonnes cappe, which he had of weakenes set there; thinking

The life of the Authour.

thinking to saue him selfe by that meanes, whereupon he rebuked him sharpely, commanding him to take that marke of sedition out of his cappe, & laying foorth befoze him, that the true crosse which we must beare, are tribulations and afflictions which God sendeth vs, as moste certaine pledges and earnest pennies of that ioye and euerlasting life which he hath prepared for his children. The seeing him selfe earnestly pressed by the sayde Senescay, to go to the King, resolving him selfe to dye the death which he sawe prepared for him, tooke his cloke, embraced his wyfe, and desired her aboue al things to haue the honour and feare of God befoze her eies, and so departed with a most cheerefull countenance.

Nowe when hee was almost come to the streete called la Verrerie, ouer against the Cocke streete, certaine murderers that waited for him with their daggers ready drawne, aboue thre houres, slewe him like a silly lambe in the middelt of ten or twelue of Senescays Archers which guided him, and his house was sacked the space of fve or sixe dayes togither. The bodie of this Gentleman la Place, whose soule was receiued into heauen, was carried into a stable, at the town house,

The life of the Authour.

house , where his face was couered with
dongue , and the next day after in the mor-
ning was cast into the riuer.

Thus this great and excellent martyꝛ of
the Lord, whylest he obeyed the Kings com-
mandement , in steade of Justice which hee
sought , found death by the way , which was
to him a beginning of the true life: and on þ
cōtrarie side, both to them, from whom so vn-
iust, against all Gods lawe and mans lawe , &
so cruel and barbarous and more then brutish
commandements, proceeded, and also to the
executers of such iniquities, cruelties, barba-
rities, and brutishnes, a most certaine begin-
ning and entrance to an horrible iudgement
that hangeth ouer their heads, and ouer
their posteritie, though it seeme
long before it come.

(.♦.)



Of the excellencie of a Christian man , and the way to knowe him.

the excell-
ency com-
on to all
en.

MY intent and purpose be-
ing to intreat of the wooz-
thines of a Christian man,
I meane not in any wyse
to stande to discourse vpon
the excellencie of mankind
wherein we do all communicate , and where-
by the state of man surmounteth the condi-
tion of all other creatures : a reason which
moued the Philosophers to recommend vn-
to vs so diligently the knowledge of our sel-
ues, according to the olde prouerbe giuen by
Oracle, and framed by them to this purpose
to cause vs not onely to keepe our selues
within the boundes of modestie and hum-
blenes, and to teache vs the weakenes of our
nature , but also to leade vs to the considera-
tion of our noblenes and dignitie, beginning
by the vew of the building and workeman-
ship of this world, as of Heauen, the Sunne,
the Moone , and the Starres : and so from
them to other creatures and liuing things of
diuers sortes, setting out Man , as the most
excellent piece of worke of all , and the chie-
fest

of a Christian man.

best wrought thing amongst all the creatures, on whome it pleased God to bestowe moste plentifulle, and to enriche with that, which Heauen and earth, and all other his creatures had but small portions of, who was therefore called a Litle worlde, and a miracle amongst all creatures, considering the workmanship of his bodie, the ioyntes, the proportion, the beautie and vse of it with his members, his head aboue all his other partes, his eyes looking vp to heauen, to beholde from whence he came: and againe, the quickenes of his wit, his discourses vpon the heauens and the earth, and the secretes of nature, his memorie, whereby he comprehendeth so many things & digesteth them, compareth things passed with things to come: Moreouer his reason, which as they imagine is placed as Queene & Mistresse in the wit in the highest seate of vnderstanding to gouerne the will of man, and to frame all his deliberations by the compasse of wisdom.

I meane not, I saye, in any wise to intreate of this kinde of worthines: but minding to passe further, I purpose with my selfe to speake of an other kinde of excellencie, which is proper and peculiar to a Christian

The excellency proper to a Christian.

Of the excellencie

A foolish
prayse of
the pow-
ers & ver-
tues that
are in man.

stian man, which farre surmounteth with-
out all comparison in all kinde of preroga-
tiue and preeminence the former, bee it ne-
uer so highly commended and set out by
them which professed them selues wise men,
and were therefore reputed and taken for the
wisest amongst other. Which men notwith-
standing or wyle Philosophers, being car-
ried away with an ouerweening and blynde
loue of them selues, ouershot them selues so
farre, as to say, that Man is able by reason of
such powers as he hath in him, & by his owne
strength, to discerne betweene good and
euill, and commande his lustes, and that he
hath it in him to gouerne him selfe, not onely
for the framing of this earthly life, but also
to leade him to Godwarde, and to the attai-
nement of euerlasting blisse and ioye. More-
ouer, that as touching Life, he hath it by the
gift of God, but as for Liuing well, he hath it
of him selfe, and the goodnes that is in man,
man getteth it of him selfe, in so much as no
wise and discrete man, sayeth Cicero, euer
gaue God any thanks for it, because, sayth
he, we are commended for our vertue, and
we bragge and boaste our selfe of it: which
we could not doe, if it were the gift of God,
and came not of our selues: adding moreo-
uer,

of a Christian man.

uer, that the opinion of all the worlde is this, that as for worldly commodities, we haue to craue them at Gods handes, but as for wisdom, euery man hath to seeke it within him selfe.

Mainteining and publishing this false opinion, that what soeuer we do by the conduct and guyde of nature, it can not be but well done, and if man could followe that rightly, which he hath in him of nature, he could neuer do amisse. And many other such foolish and vayne sayings, which notwithstanding (a thing more to bee sorrowed at) they that make profession to be our instructors in holy writte, do marueilously embrace: who by suffering them selues to be caried away more then reason would they should, by this kinde of heathenish wisdom, are fallen into the self same error, and haue ascribed to man I knowe not what kinde of integritie and vprightnes both in his reason, and will, in so much that euen they amongst them which thought to speake more soberly and modestly then the rest, as Chrysostome and certaine other, haue made such a parting of stakes betweene God & man, that while they confesse on the one side, that we can do nothing without Gods helpe, they mainteyne on the other

C i.

side,

Of the excellencie

side, that vnesse wee bring some thing of our selues, the grace of God can not helpe vs: for as they saye, all the matter lyeth not in Gods helpe, but we must cast in our reckoning also: yea, and that it is in vs to beginne, and in God to make an ende, holding this for an vndoubted trueth, that **G D D** hath giuen man power to doe well and to doe euill, both when, and as him listeth, and that he is at his own choyle, to take of them, which he will.

A blindnes, ere in the knowledge of the excellencie that is in man.

This I saye, to shewe, howe with all the light of vnderstanding and vprightnes of reason, (whereunto they ascribe the soueraintie of the whole man, making it as it were a Monarche and Emperour) man is blinded and daseled with the knowledge of the excellencie, which he laboureth in vaine to finde in him selfe by the knowledge of his powers, and beholding all things that are within him. And so consequently howe much they abuse them selues, which thinke there is no better way to moue and perswade men to frame their liues accordingly as they ought, then to put them in remembrance what goodly and precious things they haue in them, for thereby they will be moued to make some accompt of them selues, and be
more

more carefull to keepe them selues in their place and degree, shunning sinne, and following righteousness: seeing that all this can serue to no other purpose, but to puffe him vp with vayne glorie and ouerweening of him selfe, and cause him to wearie him self in conceiuing a good opinion of him selfe, which will not further him the worth of a pinne, and then to vndertake suche things, as hee shall neuer be able to compasse, neither by the reache of reason, nor by accomplishing in deede what hee intended. For the true knowledge of a mans selfe, according to the rule of trueth, standeth properly in this, that man weye with him selfe the miserable state and condition whereinto we are fallen through the fall of Adam, to the ende that hauing a right feeling of it as wee ought, all vayne glorie and presumption may bee beaten downe in vs, with a deepe consideration of the losse of our vprightnes, and in steade thereof, of a corruption and fall from all goodnes, which is come vpon vs by reason of the corruption of our nature, Satan hauing so faste footing in al the parts of our soule, that euery one of vs in him selfe (as S. Augustine saith) is become a Deuil, enemie to God, and accursed on all sides,

The true
knowledge
of a mans
selfe.

to the ende that being liuely touched by this meanes with the feeling of our vanitie and frowardnes, we may be moued to come out of our selues, as voyde and destitute of all goodnes, and seeke our excellencie, worthines, and noblenes somewhere els, yea and be moued to sighe, and in sighing to breathe after it with great desire to recouer the same.

Their error, which they haue thought was excellencie in that which is of man.

Whereby it appeareth how grossely they were deceiued and abused, which thought to finde the worthines of man within man himselfe, and in that that is of man. The cause of their errour is this, that the secreete of their destruction and fall, which came by our first fathers fault, and wherein they would needes seeke a faire and sound building, was not reueiled vnto them. Whereby it came to passe, that through pryde which they conceiued of them selues for that small remnant of light that remained of the first beginning which was included in our nature, (which they call a litle portion of the Godhead) they spake so boldly and presumptuously of that which they knewe not, and commended man for that which in deede is not in him, and wherefore he is not in any wyse to be commended. And seeing the case standeth so, that though man be fallen into a miserable state

of a Christian man.

state through the fall of Adam, & the image of God in him be marred and miserably deformed, yet he hath some sparkes left, whereby there remaineth in him some darke light and perseuerance of the excellencie of his nature, that is to saye, of that vprightnes wherewith the first man was beautified and made noble, so that the corruption of sinne was not able to do so much, as vtterly to deface the image of God in vs, but that there remained alwaies some litle trace of it, thereby it came to passe, that men pricked and awakened with the feeling of the reliques of their first dignitie and excellencie (inwrapped notwithstanding in darkenes, and possessed with a peruerse and presumptuous desire to haue somewhat of their owne, and remaining within them) were easely moued to praise and commend the excellencie of their nature: which foolishhe desire beeing once presented to the vnderstanding and brayne of eche man, by the same deceiuer that would needes perswade our fathers to become like to God, there is not one of vs that hath not a roote of pryde deeply planted within his heart.

Not that I meane to denie, but that litle vnderstanding that man hath in him euen of
C iii. nature

Of the excellencie

nature for the maintenance of this present life, and that discretion of good and euill engraued in his heart, yea & that piece of knowledge of God which he hath naturally in him, is not out of doubt excellent, in that it cometh from God: but I saye, that all these thinges are defiled in man, euen as wyne that hath receiued infection by the vnsauery taste of the vessel, wherinto it was put, wherby the grace of his sauiour and goodnes is gone, and hath gotten beside a bitter and vnwholsome taste. Because, the iudgement and discretion which he hath left to discerne and make his choyse of thinges, is partly imperfect and full of confusion, and all the witte he hath, becommeth wayne, as also his will is tempestuously caried and full of phrensies accordingly as man is wholly caried away with sinne, and to be shorthe, his vnderstanding, and perceyuerance which he hath of G D D is nothing els, but a very horrible wellspring of errours, as appeareth not onelie by the idolatries and superstitions which he inuenteth, but also herein, that wheras the heauens keepe their natural motion, and the waters their accustomed course, the byrdes make their nestes, and the plantes bring forth fruit eche one in his due time, and to be

All the excellencie of man, as of man, is defiled.

of a Christian man.

to be short, no creature subiect to man faulteth in his worke, man indued with knowledge, iudgement, discourse and vnderstanding, is he that onely erreth, and erreth in such sort, that in the whole world, there is no fault, no disorder & confusion, but on his part. So that, to speake truely, there remaineth not one droppe of vprightnesse in his whole nature, so farre is he from that excellencie, whereof I meane to speake, by reason of the corruption that is in him, as euery man will freely confesse, that can and doeth rightly consider the heauie sight of his decaie.

Wherefore seeing that this our nature, which is common to all men liuing, is not capable of that excellencie whereof I speake, we must needes saye, that that man of whom I speake, is transformed into an other newe and more excellent nature, whereupon God hath bestowed a singular & wonderfull vertue, which farre passeth and surmounteth all that is in mā, as in deede it can not be found, nor be confessed to proceede from any, but frō God, yea from the Lord and sauiour Iesus Christ: by whom his good pleasure was to restore al mankind, towards whom thoughy soueraine Creator & maker of al things sheweth sufficiētly his fatherly fauour diuers &

The common nature of man is not capable of the excellencie of a Christian.

Of the excellencie

sundrie wayes, yet notwithstanding, vntill he shewe him selfe to man a restorer in the person of his onely begotten sonne, their conscience reproveth them within them selues, and maketh them perceiue that by reason of their filthines they are well worthy to be cast away as wretched men and caitifs, and can not be taken and accounted for his worke established in them. In which worke is onely and truely that excellencie wherof I meane to speake, which is a worke that farre passeth the worke of the first creation of man, as it will appeare more plainly hereafter, of which

The wonderful
worke of
God appeareth
in a
Christian.

man when S. Paul speaketh, he saith that the efficacie of the might and power, that is to say, of the mightie power of God is plentifully shewed in him, because he setteth forth in him, after a wonderful sort his infinite vertue, according to the unspeakeable goodnes, grace, and fauour, which hee beareth to a Christian man.

The wonderful
goodnes of god
which appeareth
in
Christia

And that it is so, to shewe it more particularly, our heauenly Father not content that he brought a Christian into the worlde, of nothing, and that he made him not an oxe or an asse, which he might haue done, or a dogge, or a catte, or any other more vile and abiect creature, but a man, that is to saye, a singular

of a Christian man.

lar and perfect piece of workmanship, and that he made the worlde and beautified the heauens and the earth with a perfect abundance, varietie, and beautie of all things, to lodge him in it, as it were in a great & sumptuous palace, well and richely furnished with all things necessarie, not content I say, with al this, & moreouer, that he had forgotten his vnthankfull and detestable infidelitie and felonie, where he deserued to be cast of, & depriued for euer of all his blessings: yet notwithstanding it pleased him, of a certaine more then fatherly loue, and speciall fauour which he bare him, not onely euen from his birth day, and from the first howre that he brought him out into this worlde, but euen from his mothers wombe, yea, and before he was conceived, yea, and that more is, before the worlde was made (as he predestined him to him selfe from euerlasting) to elect and chuse him frō amongst an infinite million of men, to marke him & set him apart, to exempt him from the common state and condition of al other men, that is to say, from euerlasting condemnatiō and destruction which was prepared for him as wel as for euery other man, to reserue him for him selfe, to adopt, and regenerate him in the hope of life to an incorruptible inheritāce
kept

Of the excellencie

kept in store in heauen, to be reueiled to his elect at that day when all thinges shalbe restored, and to shewe in him the richesse of his glorie, as in a vessell of mercie prepared to saluation.

The cause
of the excel
lencie of a
Christian
consisteth
in the only
goodnes of
God.

All the cause of this excellent prerogative and dignitie, is not as we see to be sought any where els, but in the singular grace and mercie of God, whom it pleased without any further regarde or consideration of any thing without him selfe, foreseeing the faulte and condition of mankinde, of his good pleasure to haue mercie vpon some, to set them in honour as vessels of his mercie, and leaue the rest in their iudgement, giuing grace to some which was not due to them, and rendering to the rest that punishment that was due to the, being in his power to giue to one part that which they deserued not, so setting forth his grace: and not to giue it to all, thereby shewing what al had deserued without further bestowing like mercie on all: for he made all things, as Salomon saith, for his owne sake: yea, the wicked man to the daye of his destruction, according to the decree of the good pleasure of his will, which onely is the soueraine and high rule of iustice that iudgeth all the world: his wayes, which are mercie and
trueth

of a Christian man.

trueth being incomprehensible, as whereby he so worketh, that they which obtaine mercie at his handes, haue nothing but his mercie to boaste of, and they that are left in their condemnation, haue nothing to gaine say the iudgemēt of trueth as men guiltie, nor ought wherewith to pleade against him, in so much as on the one side, to shewe forth his wrath, and make his mightie power knownen, hee through great patience and meekenes beareth with the vessels of wrath prepared to destruction, & on the other side, setteth out y^e richesse of his glorie towards thē y^e he chose by his grace, whom he prepared to glorie.

For so it is, as S. Augustine sheweth it at large, where he speaketh of y^e predestination of God, that when God had resolved wth him selfe, to buyld the Monarchie of this world & al that is cōteined in it, & foresawe, y^e the first man should fall wittingly and willingly into death, being pliable to good & euill, hauing not that giuen him to continue & stande stedily in that state wherein he was placed: yea and that al mortal creatures should be within the compassse of his fall, & subiect vnto it, hauing so appointed it by his incomprehensible counsel and wisdom, which hath a foreknowledge of all thinges ioyned with it, as also

Of the eternal coun-
sel of God
touching
m:

Of the excellencie

also his mightie power which gouerneth all things by his hande , and yet notwithstanding minded to haue a litle remnant, euē as you woulde saye, an handful of men taken out of such a great multitude, to serue for the praise of the glorie of his grace, he chose and set apart frō the multitude, one man amongst many , which should be in his time ordeined to bee conceiued of the seede of David , and should bee borne of a virgin, to wit , Iesus Christ, (finding nothing in all the seede of Adam worthy his election, and such a prerogative and excellencie) in whom also as in the head, he chose to be members as it were of his bodie , such as it pleased him freely of his grace to appoint before hand and receiue to life : and by the selfe same man , to ioyne them vnto himselfe , and allie them so together that they should neuer be seuered , hauing foreseene a great while before that in Adam, there should come good of euill , and knewe most vndoubtedly, that it belonged to his almightie goodnes to turne good into euill , rather then to suffer that there should be no euil, and so accordingly disposed the life of men and Angels, as that he would therby shewe first what free will was able to do, and then what the gift of his grace could do , ha-
uing

of a Christian man.

uing shut all vnder sinne, that all might haue neede of grace.

And therefore as the excellencie which I ascribe to a Christian, and proceedeth from this grace appeareth fully and abundantly in Iesus Christ, so is it powred out vpon his members according to the measure of euery one, by which grace man was made a Christian when he first began to beleue, as our Sauour was made Christ according to the fleshe, when hee first began to bee man. And therefore was he called Christ, and the other by his meânes, Christians, as streames flowing from the chiefe fountaine: for so had the Almighty purposed in him selfe to gather them vnto him, by the blood of the Crosse of Iesus Christe, at the fulnes of time appointed, finding them miserably strayed and scattered amongst the other, and set them in their right state: which is, to cleaue continually to him, beeing knit and coupled together with him in a true and perfite vnitie, by engrafting them into the body of his Sonne. Who for that cause are called elect or chosen through the good pleasure of God, to make a difference betweene them and the other which were not kept in the sayde vnitie, but forsaken by a secret reprobation

The excellencie of a Christian appeareth fully in Iesus Christ
The excellencie of a Christian proceedeth of that fulnes which is i Christ
All the elect are gathered together in Christ.

Of the excellencie

bation in the secret counsel of God.

The cause
and mat-
ter of the
excellencie
of a Chri-
stian is
wholy to
be referred
to the loue
and good-
nes of god
by Christ
from euer-
lasting.

The vni-
ting & ioy-
ning toge-
ther of a
Christian
& Christ.

So that, whether we meane the cause,
or the matter it selfe of the excellencie of a
Christian man, so farre I am either from
seeking or setting the saide excellencie of a
Christian, in man him selfe, as the Philoso-
phers doe, that I meane not to ascribe it to
any thing in y^e world, but to that headspring
of all graces, benefites, and blessings, that is
to say, to the euerlasting loue and gracious
goodnes of God by Iesus Christ, in whom
God chose his elect before the foundation
of the world, to adopt them according to the
purpose of his will, and made them agreea-
ble in his welbeloued sonne, who was by him
appointed head ouer them, which by him and
through him, and no otherwise, are restored
and settled in his grace, and made his heires
to enioye his kingdome, where as before
they were a cursed rase of Adam, and inheri-
ters of hel fire. For the Father loueth none,
but in his Sonne, and vouchsafeth none his
inheritance, vnlesse he first ioyne them to his
sonne by a secret bond and vnitie, causing the
vertue of the head to descende into the mem-
bers, as the sappe of the roote of the tree
goeth into the grasse that is impied into it,
in so much as this spirituall bond and knot
belongeth

of a Christian man.

belogeth not only to the soule, but also to the body, and so, that the Christian man is made one with Iesus Christ, flesh of his flesh, and bones of his bones, yea euē so farre forth, that they beare his name & person befoze God, & he rather respected in their persons, then in his owne. To be short, euē as naturally the only beholding of the face of man moueth vs to loue him and all his parts, though if we should vew his mēbers apart, we might happily finde somewhat to mislike vs, & bring vs out of taste, so fareth it likewise with y^e Christian, who is a mēber of Iesus Christ, being considered in Christs face and person, which when God beholdeth in his elect, impzinted as it were in them by the repairing of his image in them, loueth and cheriseth them, as persons with whom he is wel pleased.

So that to speake in few words, it is this fellowship which they haue wth Christ (whereunto they are called, both by the communion of one selfsame spirit, & one self same nature which is both in them and him) wherein the excellencie of a Christian man consisteth and appeareth very euidently, in that he is set in the highest degree of honour being made the childe of God, by Iesus Christ taking vpon him that that was p^{ro}per to man to be made
man

The excellencie of a Christian doth well appeare in the fellowship which he hath wth Christ.

Of the excellencie

man as he was, and to make him felow with him selfe in that that was proper to him self, by making him the sonne of God. For thence commeth his holy brotherhoode, which hee teacheth vs, saying, I go to my Father and your Father, to my God & your God. Being not ashamed (as the Apostle saith) notwithstanding the great oddes that is betwixt him and vs, to abase him selfe so farre as to call vs Brethren, euen after his resurrection, when he had put of al his infirmitie, vs, I say, which are not otherwise worthy to bee vnder his

The Christian man
farre passe
leth all o-
ther men.

seruants. Herein therefore the Christian mā appeareth to be aloft, not onely aboue all o-ther liuing creatures by reason of his owne nature, as y^e Philosophers say, but also aboue al other mē by this p^reminence which those Philosophers knewe not at all, whereby he surmounteth the dignitie of the first man, taking him in the greatest perfection he euer had, because the grace of God is farre more settled & sure in the regeneration of the faithfull, then it was in the first state of man, that being greater which we haue recovered in Christ Iesus, then y^e which we lost in Adam. For Adam had grace giuen him to continue in goodnes, if he had would, but to the Christian it is giuen to haue a wil, and in hauing a
will

That
which the
Christian
recouereth
in Christ,
is greater
then that
which he
lost in A-
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will hee ouercommeth his lustes. So that Adam might if he would, but he had no will, that he might: and the Christian hath both will and might giuen him. So that the first libertie was giuen to Adam, that he might abstaine from sinne and not die: but that that is giuen to the Christian, (the pledges wherof we haue here, and looke for the perfection in heauen) standeth in this, that he can neither sinne nor die, because the elect are vnseparably knit with Iesus Christ their head, which bond maketh them strong and stedfast, to cleaue to God for euer.

To be short, this excellencie of a Christian man mounteth so high, that it surmounteth the excellencie of the verie Angels, in this respect that the euerlasting Sonne of God vnited him selfe to mans nature, and not the nature of Angels, minding to perfite and accomplish in it, the wonderfull worke of our redemption: and afterwarde hauing glorified it with immortallitie, by his resurrection, he set it in his heauenly kingdome aboue all principalities and heauenly powers in al honour and glorie: so that the Christian man being partaker of the flesh of Christ which is carried vp and reigneth on high, hath part also of the same kingdome and glorie. And

D i. though

Of the excellencie

though the Angels, as touching their naturall essence, are counted more excellent then man, yet notwithstanding, because they haue no head of their kind and nature, the Sonne of God, euen according to the flesh, surmounteth them in dignitie and noblenes.

The chiefe excellencie of a Christian is to be made like vnto God.

To this purpose, S. Peter speaking of Christians, thought it not mough to say, that they are a chosen generation, an holy race, a peculiar people to set forth the great vertues of God, and a Royall Priesthode, consecrated to Iesus Christ, to offer sacrifices, not for the remission of sinnes (for that office is thoroughly accomplished by Christ Iesus his onely sacrifice, the force whereof remaineth for euer) but sacrifices of prayse, and thanksgiving, and calling vpon the name of God, which are the calues of our lippes, and sacrifices of beneuolence, & imparting our goods with the poore: he thought it not enough, I say, to giue them all these so great and honorable titles, but goeth on further and saith, they are made partakers of y^e diuine nature, which is so excellent a condition, that the head of man is not able to imagine or wishe an higher. For in deede, what can a man desire more, then to become like to God: surely the spirit of man is not sufficient & able to comprehend

prehend the greatnes of this grace, & howe it might be that God should vouchsafe to honour mā so highly, as to make him a god as it were, if we may so say, by making him partaker of his diuine immortality & blessed glory.

And therfore S. Paul wryting to y Coloss. The Christian man is made perfect in Christ. and speaking to them as to Christians, saith that they were cōplete in Christ, when he had said a litle before, y al y fulnes of the godhead dwelleth bodily in him, shewing thereby, that this perfect essence of y Godhead which is in Iesus Christ, did auaille thē in that, that they receiued thereby their perfectiō also. And in that that God is wholly in him, is to the ende that when they once possesse him, they might obtaine such a perfection in him, as none of vs is able to atteine vnto by all the wit & vnderstanding we haue. Yea so farre forth, that this knot and bond is such an one, that Iesus Christ who worketh all in al, vouchsafeth the Christian thus much honour, that he cōstituteth him self after a sort imperfect, if he be not ioy- The wonderful vni- ting of a Christian w Christ. ned with him, as S. Paul witnesseth, saying, that the Church is the filling vp of the bodie of Christ. And therfore there is no marueile, if the Prophet Dauid rauished with great admiration of this so wonderfull goodnes and loue of God towarde mankind, and

Of the excellencie

beeing as it were rauished and besides him selfe cried and saide, Lorde what is man that thou so regardedst him: that is to say, that of thy gracious goodnes thou hast made him so excellent a creature: For if he should consider and seeke his first beginning frō whence he came, where shal he finde it but in the durt and dust of the earth: if he marke the place of his abode, he shall finde him selfe scrawling here vpon the earth belowe: if he looke to his end, hee shall see that his bodie shalbe meate for wormes. And yet notwithstanding, saith he, thou hast so highly honoured this poore creature Man, that the Angels serue him, as if he were a God. For thou hast made him a litle inferior to God, and hast crowned him with glorie and honour, and placed him ruler ouer the workes of thine hands, and hast put all things in subiection vnder his feete: As if he would saye, what occasion did durt giue thee, that of it thou shouldest make a creature to thine image and likenes, whom thou wouldest make Lorde and Master of all the worlde: and put in subiection vnder his feete what so euer is vnder the compasse of heauen: speaking of the man that is restored in Iesus Christ.

For in deede it is he onely, and none but he

of a Christian man.

he amongst all liuing things that is the on-
ly Lord of the world, by recovering that inte-
rest in Christ, which was before lost in Adam
who was at the beginning made heire and
Lorde of all Gods blessings, but was after-
wardes dispossessed of them through his re-
bellion, and disobedience, so that all his poste-
ritie hath no other interest nor title, in the
blessings of this worlde, then theeuers & rob-
bers haue, which take awaye other mens
goodes, the Christian onely except, to whom
of right belongeth the vse of all things, as S.
Paul saith, whether it be the world, or life, or
death, or things present, or things to come, al
things, in a word, are his, because they were
made for his profit. And there is nothing, but
God maketh it serue, & turneth it to his pro-
fit, in so much that by a speciall dispensation
of his prouidence, hee causeth that the very
sinnes them selues which man committeth,
turne rather to his saluatiō then to his hurt,
in that that by them he humbleth them, and
maketh them better taught, and more adui-
sed. To be short, this Man is a creature that
from euerlasting was in Gods heart through
Jesus Christ, and therefore a thing so riche
and precious, that it may wel be called Gods
treasure.

Only the
Christian
is Lord of
the world

All things
are profit-
ble to the
Christian
yea, euen
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The Ch-
istian man
is from e-
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in the heart
of God.

The Ch-
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Gods tre-
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Of the excellencie

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the excellē=
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Christian.

But seeing I haue begun to dilate this excellencie of a Christian man by the eueralasting counsell of **G D D**, which he determined and appointed within him selfe before the worlde was, according to his gracious goodnes fully set forth in Iesus Christ to all them whom he hath coupled together with him: It shall be good nowe to come lower, and to treat of the matter, as it were by descent from heauen to earth, and to shewe this excellencie more particularly in a Christian, beginning at his regeneration, and so going on from point to point, to shewe howe miraculously he is formed, nourished and brought vp to ripe age: what maners he is of, what his life is, and what his conuersation, to set him out after this sort in his coulours and markes as he is. For in deede he is a newe creature, whom the world knoweth not, and an hidden treasure in a vile and contemptible vessell, hard to knowe, if he be not well marked out & set forth with liuely colours. And least in discoursing of it, we fall headlōg into the same errour, which the wise fooles of the world fall into in their discourses vpon his excellencie, it shall not be amisse, if at the entrie of the matter, I warne euery man to beware he presume not so much of him selfe,

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world kno=
veth not.

of a Christian man.

as to imagine that hee hath ought of his owne, as though he had in him selfe any piece of a cause, meane, or aide to set forwarde this worke.

Man may bring nothing of his owne to make him a Christian.

Therefore, as I sayde before, that we haue not to seeke the cause or ground worke, or matter of this excellencie anie where els, but in the meere grace of God according to hys everlasting prouidence: so saye I agayne, to shut out all worthynesse of man, that all the goodnesse and vertue that maye possible be found in man, proceedeth from the fruite of Gods election: and therefore to be a Christian, that is to say, the best of all creatures, proceedeth wholly from the gift of our heauenly Father, in that that whatsoeuer he hath giuen to Christ, cometh to Christ, and in that that no one whit of the worlde belongeth to the Creator, were it not that the grace of God plucketh a fewe out of destruction, which otherwise should haue perished, the worlde being lefte in that destruction, whereunto it is moste iustlie appoynted. And for this cause Iesus Christ protesteth, that he prayeth the Father for them onely whome the Father hath giuen him. For in deede, the grace of God findeth no cause in any man, why hee should be good vnto him, but man receiue

The excellencie of a Christian proceedeth from Gods election, & from nothing that is in man.

Of the excellencie

all of his mercie, because it is Gods worke onely to saue his, and for that ende and purpose to make them fit and meete to be partakers of his inheritance. And for a man to imagine any pretence for man in this case, it were as much as if hee shoulde go about to make him his owne maker. And if we do well to giue God all the praise for the direction of this our corruptible life, howe may we be so bold to ascribe that vnto our selues, which is without cōparison a thousand times better: to wit, the life that perisheth not, but remaineth for euer, seeing it is a great deale easier to make vs men, then by our owne industrie and vertue to bee regenerate into a farre more excellent nature.

Whereupon Saint Paul, to take away all presumptuous opinion of mans brayne in this behalfe, sayeth, That it is neither in the willer, nor in the runner, that is to saye, neither in merite, nor worthines, nor industrie, nor will, nor helpe, or any meanes that man can worke, but in the onely goodnes of our Lord and Master, who doeth all things according to the counsell of his good will, not according to our workes, but according to the purpose of his grace, which was giuen vs by Iesus Christe before the worlde was. And
this

of a Christian man.

this ought of a trueth content vs and suffice vs for all reason that may bee brought: for to go about to searche out any other, what were it els, but to open a gappe for rashe and heady fellowes to demande in like sorte a reason of al his workes, why he bestoweth his graces more vpon some, the vpon other, as to beginne with the brute beastes, why God made them not reasonable creatures: and why he made not a woman, a Man: and why he made not the ignorant, weake and pooze man, a wyse, strong, and riche man: and as touching the elect them selues, why they are not the same that their head is, why there is so great oddes betweene them, why they are so vncleane, and he verie cleannes it self, and so in summe, why he bestoweth not his gistes, as well vpon this man, as vpon that man.

And yet my meaning is not, y God hath no reason for making such a difference betweene his creatures as he hath done: but because that reason is hidden within his secret counsell, I say, it must suffice vs for good and all, that his will was so, and say with S. Augustine, that faithfull ignorance is better then rashe knowledge: yea that such ignorance is learned, & the desire to know more,
is a

Of the excellencie

is a kinde of madnes. Therefore when we see that some haue this honour done them, y they are made Christians as well as other, though we see no euident cause why it should be so, we must learne to stand in admiration of the deepenes and profoundenes of Gods iudgement, which we may in no wise dispute of: and therefore euerie one of vs hath to content him selfe to knowe, that to be a Christian, is the workemanship, as S. Paul saith, and creature of God, created in Iesus Christ, and that God hath blessed him with all spirituall blessings in heauenly things in him, as he chose him in him before the foundation of the worlde, being predestined of God to adopt him to himselfe, according to the good pleasure of his will to the prayse of his grace, which he hath powred out moste plentifully vpon him, in all wisdom and vnderstanding, and to whom he hath giuen to knowe the secret of his will, according to his euerlasting decree which he purposed in him selfe, being moued thereunto by no other meanes, then of him selfe.

To be a
Christian,
is the only
worke of
God.

Of the re-
generation
if a Chri-
tian.

So then to come to the regeneration of a Christian, and to speake of the order that is holden therein, First of al we may not dreame of any such generation as Pythagoras made, who

of a Christian man.

who thought that as soone as y^e bodies were dead, the soules went into other bodies : neither may we dreame of any naturall generation or power of man , whereby this man should be made after this sorte : for this generation is not wrought by a corruptible & vncleane seede , as the first was whereof we are all partakers , which can engender nothing but corruption, nothing can be bozne of fleshe but fleshe , whose ende is death and destruction : but by an other and second generation which is spiritual, made of an holy & vncorruptible seede , which is the worde of God preached, wherby they that are appointed to saluation , are called and begotten to him. For in deede there is no other differēce betweene Predestination , and Calling , but this , that predestination is a preparatiue of that, whereof the calling is the effect and the accomplishment : and yet my meaning is not, that this generation is made by the vertue of one simple worde vttered by the voyce of man which soundeth onely in the eares, which God vseth as his meanes and instrument to call all men indifferently to him : (for many are called, sayeth Christ, but fewe are chosen, and it were to set a mortall man to much on cockhorse to saye that his voyce were
were

Of the excellencie

were so pearcing of it self as to worke a regeneration in the soule of man) but I say, it is by an other inward calling of God, by the meanes of the outward which is wrought by mā, which inwarde calling maketh it selfe heard within, by drawing the heart vnto it, which receiueth y^e witnes of the euerlasting grace, and without which, the voice of man could be but a bare sounde that vanisheth away in the ayre, and a literal preaching & dead without any fruite, the seede time being of litle value, vnesse the increase be giuē by vertue of that life which is reserued onely for them which were appointed vnto it from the beginning of the world, according to y^e purpose of God, and no purpose of theirs: to whom onely it is giuen to know the secrets of the kingdome of heauen, all other men being shut out and left to their owne nature, whereby they are deafe and blinde, conceived and borne such of the vncleane seede of their parentes, hauing beside a darkened vnderstanding which can not cōprehende the mysteries of God: for his worde is couered and hidden to them, so that they can no more perceiue the glorious and bright shining light of it, then blinde men can the light of the Sunne: for no man can come to Chryste, vnesse he haue a speciall grace giuen

of a Christian man.

giuen him from aboue.

Nowe as touching the way that our hea- Howe a
man beco-
meth a
Christian.
uently Father taketh in framing a Christian
man, this it is, he first determined in him self
to make the world and all things to his glo-
rie, and men especially, to shewe to one sorte
of them which are predestinate to saluation,
his mercie, and to the other sorte, his iustice:
And to this effect he appointed for an onely
and sole Mediatour, Iesus Christ his onely
begotten Sonne, of one selfe same substance
with him selfe, euen God euerlasting, to the
ende that by him being made man, & the two
natures vnited and ioyned together in one in
him, all corruption of mankinde might bee
purged, and all righteousness fully accompli-
shed in him for all, as one able ynough to su-
steine the iudgement of God, and woorthie
ynough to appease his wrath by the offering
vp of him selfe, the iust dying for the vniust,
and to sanctifie all his elect, abolishing their
sinne in them by the communication of his
death, and quickening them by his resurrec-
tion. To be short, he determined with him
selfe to giue them his Sonne, & in him what
soeuer is requisite for their saluation, as also
to giue them to him, and so to make them
Christians, by ingrassing them into Christ:
which

Of the excellencie

which euerlasting purpose and decree, he resolved also to reueile vnto them, when they should not thinke of it, causing him selfe to be found, as the Prophet saith, of them, which inquired not after him, and at that time, that they walke after the course & fashion of this worlde, euen as Satan would haue them, and proceedeth in it after this sort.

First, to awake them out of the dead sleepe of sinne wherinto they are fallen, he pricketh them with the sharpenes of his Lawe, and laying a number of examples of his Justice before them, driueth them into a feare, not minding to beate them downe into desperation, but to make them turne their faces towardes the Mediatour, in whome they may finde some place of refuge. And to this end, he layeth before them in cōclusion his grace and fatherly goodnes by the preaching of his Gospel, he teacheth them, he maketh them apt to receiue instruction, assureth them of their election, summoneth them to his heauenly inheritance, stretcheth out his hande vnto them to bring them thither, yea and draweth them vnto him, fashioneth thē newe eares, lighteneth their eyes, changeth their stonie heart into a fleshy heart, openeth their vnderstanding, reneweth their senses, disposeth

seth and maketh them fit to sauiour and taste his worde, which he soweth, and causeth it to budde and bring forth fruit in them, maketh them fit for his election. To be short, when he hath once formed Christ in them, he decketh and enricheth them with many giftes and graces, and where as they were farre of from him, he maketh them drawe neere to him, of straungers hee maketh them house-birdes, of wolues sheepe flocking together vnder the great pastour of soules: of naturall, fleshly, earthly, and deuellish men, he maketh them heauenly, spirituall, angellike and diuine: and by this meanes translateth them from the kingdome of darkenes, into the kingdome of light, transporteth them from death to life, and bringeth them into his own housholde. To be short, hauing thus ingrafted them into the body of his Sonne, he ioyneth and allieth him selfe to them, he maketh him selfe one with them, maketh them his children and heyes, partakers of his immortallitie and glozie, and all this he worketh by the inward vertue of his holy Ghost, & with an other maner of efficacie then by restoring the reliques of free wil, as some popish mates vse to speake, seeing that all the remainder that man hath of this free will, serueth to nothing

thing els but to sinne willingly, to flie from God, to hate him, and to haue no wil to heare him, nor beleue in him, nor acknowledge any of his blessings: and that more is, to thinke vpon nothing but vpon sinne, and not to haue so much as one good thought.

Which wonderfull order S. Bernard considering, cryeth out and sayeth, Beholde an high and marueilous counsell, which hath bene published to vs. God knoweth the that are his, and what he knewe, he hath shewed to men: he receiueth none to the knowledge of this mysterie and hidden thing, but such as he hath predestined. And addeth moreover, The mercie of God from euerlasting to euerlasting on them that feare him: from euerlasting, because of his predestination: to euerlasting, because of the blessednes which they looke for, the one hath no beginning, & the other hath no end. S. Augustine also saith in like sort, Is not this a kinde of schole, far from the sense of the fleshe, wherein the Father is the scholemaster that teacheth vs to come to him, and the Sonne of God is the worde whereby he teacheth, and which entreth by the eare euen to the heart, where is also the Spirit of the Father & the Sonne, who teacheth also ioyntly with them, and not
apart,

of a Christian man.

apart; for the workes of the Trinitie are inseparable, so that, if we see numbers come to the Sonne, it is by him that maketh many to beleue in Christ. But where & when euery mā hath heard & bene taught by the Father, we see it not, because this grace is hidden, secret & heavenly, wrought by y^e renewing of y^e holy Ghost, powred out plentifully vpon the.

And truely, it is a marueilous generatiō, The excellēcie of the power of God in the generation of a Christian. which maketh man a new creature, not that he receiueth an other soule, or an other bodie in substance, but in qualitie, by repaying the Image of God in him, by an inward renewing of the whole nature, that was corrupted:

yea it is a worke whiche setteth out vnto vs no lesse vertue and power of God, then that whereby Iesus Christ was raysed from the dead, and placed at the right hand of God his Father. To be short, it is done by the worde, as by the ordinarie instrument which maketh vs partakers of Christ, and frameth the Christian man, so that vlesse the doore of our hearing be opened by y^e preaching of the Gospell, the worde can not enter into the heart, and the preaching is wrought by the voyce of man assisted by the inward vertue of the holy Ghost, which man must be sent by a special grace of God, to declare vnto vs, that

Of the excellencie

this speciall grace is according to his electiō, which is according to his everlasting counsell, determined according to the good pleasure of his will, which onely is iust and reasonable. And so consequently both the calling, and other effects that follow, flowe from the everlasting Election, as brookes and streames do from their fountaines and springs.

The beginning of a Christian is from heauen, as is also his Conuersion

Therefore, seeing this man is not begottē either of fleshe or bloud, as other are, but of God, it is not for naught that I sayde before, that he is such a creature, as y^e world knoweth not. For in deede his beginning is not from hence beneath from the earth, but from aboue from heauen, as also his chiefest conuersation and abyding place is there where he hath God for his Father: and here the church for his mother, but yet in deede heauenly: Mother, because she hath her beginning from that grace, that is aboue, & moreouer because she is gardien and keper of the seede of that life that perisheth not, by which seede she conceyueth and bringeth forth this man, and when shee hath brought him forth, she nourceth him with the seasoned milke of vnderstanding, that being nourished by it, he may growe vp to saluation. And afterwarde she fostereth him with strong and substantiall

The Father & Mother of a Christian.

The nourishment of a Christian.

tiall

tiall meate, vntill he come to a perfect age, that is, to the attaynement of the latter ende of faith. Euen as the naturall man, conceiued of naturall seede is nourished with bloud in his mothers wombe, and fedde afterwarde with milke when he is once bozne, as all creatures are nourished with that whereof they are ingendred, euen so the regenerate man, conceiued and begotten of the incorruptible seede of the worde of God, is nourished and fostered by it, receyuing the same simply and purely, without any mixture and hotch poch of any other mans inuention with it.

If or as there is no food more hollesome the the nourishmet of the foode of the worde of God, if it be receyued syncerely as it is, so there is none more the pure worde of noysome and hurtful, when it is marred with God is whollsome. mixture of other things mingled with it, the is the false doctrine of men: And therefore God speaking to his Church by the mouth of his Prophet Esai, sayth after this sorte, My spirit which is in thee, and my wordes which I haue put into thee, shal neuer depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy children. And to the ende, they may growe vp and profit the better, he sealeth and marketh them with the seale and marke of Baptisme, adding mozeouer an inwarde working of

The nourishmet of the pure worde of God is whollsome.

To make the Christian growe by a profit

Of the excellencie

**Bastarde
children.**

his holy Ghost, and afterward giueth them
for meate and nourishment the Sacra-
ment of the bodie and bloud of Iesus Christ,
though he be able and sufficient ynough to
bring them to perfection in one houre. But
it pleaseth him to haue them growe up af-
ter that sorte by litle and litle, vnder the
nourishment of this mother, so that who so
is not conceived in her wombe, and brought
foorth by her, and fostered and nourished
by her, doeth boast in vayne, that **G D D**
is his Father: For he begetteth no children,
neither fostereth and bringeth up any, but by
his ministerie, so that we may not separate
these two thinges which **G D D** hath cou-
pled together, to wit, that the church is Mo-
ther to all them whose Father hee is, and
whosoever is not begotten of her, is begot-
ten of an harlot, and hath an harlot for his
mother, who begetteth children for the De-
uill, and to euerlasting death: seeing there is
no entrance into the life that remaineth for
euer, but onely for them whom this mother
keepeth, and guydeth, and gouerneth: so that
who so is out of her bosome, it is impossible
for him to be saued.

And as in y^e fleshly generation there is one
laweful and an other bastard, so fareth it also

in the Spirituall generation, there is one law-
full and an other baſtarde . The firſt is after
the ſpirit, and the ſecond after the fleſhe , and
are hereby knowen the one from the other,
that the one is conceived and made by the
ſpirit of trueth, of a chaſte mother, that is
chaſt and faithfull to her husband I E S U S
Chriſt : and the other, by the ſpirit of errour
and lyes, of a mother that playeth the har-
lot with Satan, by breaking her promeſſe
made to Chriſt, and yet notwithstanding kif-
ſing him with a trecherous kiſſe of Judas :
and lyke an hypocrite and diſſembling har-
lot as ſhe is, contenteth her ſelfe to haue but
one halfe of him: the one being touched with
a pure and naturall loue, will not haue him,
vnleſſe ſhe may enioye him wholly, and ther-
fore begetteth lawefull children, which are
children of light, begotten of the immortall
ſeede, and beautified with righteouſneſſe and
holineſſe, to the ende ſayeth Saint James,
that they may be the firſt fruites of his crea-
tures, that is to ſaye, choſen and ſet apart frō
all other men, and ſequeſtered to be an holy
offering : the other, on the contrarie ſide, be-
getteth children of darkeneſſe to Satan, of a
mortall ſeede, which are workers of iniqui-
tie, whoſe vnderſtanding is corrupt, going

Two
kindes of
ſpirituall
generation

Of the excellencie

on from naught to worse, as they are led by the spirit of lies, by whom the pure brightness of true doctrine is stopped up, and the seruice of God disfigured with many kindes of superstitions, idolatrie and wickednes, and yet vnder a colour of godlines, wisdom, & holines, whereby they draw other into errour.

Amongst
all the ba=
stard chil=
dren, the
childe of
perdition
is the chie=
fest.

Amongest all the children thus begotten, the man of sinne and childe of Satan is most notozious, in whome the spirit of Satan dwelleth in all fulnes, as he doeth also in the which haue receiued his marke in their foreheads and handes, and this man listeth by him selfe aboue all that is called God, and aboue that thing whatsoeuer it be, wherin the worship of the Lord standeth, which he transferreth to him selfe, in so much as he sitteth in the temple of God, and maketh warre against Christ, with power of illusion and deceiueablenes, the like whereof was neuer seene, bearing a booke in his hande, which is sweete in the hand, but bitter in the heart, and so much the more deadly to the consciences of men, by howe muche it is pleasant to mans sense and reason, and giueth him occasion to boast of him selfe. To be short, this generation is a crooked, vnfaithfull, wicked, and froward generation, and yet notwithstanding,

ving, the number of them is great, they are farre mightier and of greater renoume the other, which are but a small flocke, vyle, abiect, and contemptible, as touching the fleſhe.

Now then, if the meanes of this generation of a Christian man, wherby he is renewed into a newe life, and made a newe creature, be founde to bee ſuche that it ſurmounteth the capacitie of our ſenſes, we may not marueile at it, ſeeing that euen in this bodily life, we perceiue ſuch a vertue, as the reaſon wherof our ſenſes are not able to attein vnto. As for example, there is none of vs, but draweth the vital ſpirit of the ayre, and we all feele the motion of the ayre, wheremy we both drawe in our breath, and breathe out, and yet there is not one of vs that can tel, fro whence this mouing commeth, or whither it goeth. And though euery one of vs feele in him ſelf the vertue of the ayre, yet we knowe not the beginning and the cauſe of it. Well then, if in this tranſitorie life which is gone in a moment, we ſee a marueilous vertue wheremy God worketh ſo mightily in it, that it paſſeth the reache of our ſenſes, howe is it poſſible to fetch within the compaſſe of our vnderſtanding this ſecret worke in the heauy

The generation of a Christian ſurmounteth the reach of our ſenſes.

Of the excellencie

life which passeth the reache of nature, as though we were not to beleue any more, then we are able to perceiue by the newe of y^e eie:

The light
that is gi-
uen to the
Christian
can neuer
be wholly
extingui-
shed.

But the chiefest point that is to be considered in the excellencie of this generation is this, that euen as the worde of God is an vncorruptible seede of life, which bringeth forth fruite like to it selfe, and such a budde as neuer drieth vp: euen so when the Christian man is once made partaker of this light, it can neuer be so put forth and choked vp in him, but there remaineth still some sparke alway in him, such is the force of the worde, when it is once kindled in the heart of man by y^e holy Ghost, who beareth him witness that he is the childe of God, and causeth him to folowe his gouernement and conduct with a steddy heart, and holdeth him in a steddy and continuall obedience of iustice. And therefore GOD sayeth by his Prophet Ezechiel, That hee giueth them that are his, a newe heart, and promiseth the that they shal walke in his ordinances, for his holy spirit pursueth his grace in them, euen to the ende. For though there be sometime some breaches & crackes in their faith, as we haue alterations in vs by reason of our frailenes, moued therunto by such violence as Satan worketh against

gainst vs, and though the brightnes of our faith be daseled with the thicke and obscure darkenes of tentation: yet notwithstanding it ceaseth not to haue alwaies an eye to God: and that more is, though it so fall out (as we knowe it befell to Dauid) that the Christian man be for a season so dead on sleepe with such a blockishnes of sinne, that there appeareth not any one sparke of the spirit in him (as Dauid prayeth for this cause that it may be restored to him) yet notwithstanding this seede, whereby God regenerateth his elect, as it is incorruptible dieth not, though it be for a season as it were choked, so that a man would thinke, that all reuerence and feare of God were cleane put out. Yet there is a cole vnder these ashes, which kindleth and taketh fyre againe, and this roote commeth to spurt forth, when a man would haue thought it had bene cleane dead. For the vertue and goodnes of God is such, that it surmounteth our malice, so that, that man may be sure of his saluation, whom God hath once touched with a liuely faith, though it were but a very short whyle: for he is constrained to say, that that which he believed, is a trueth, seeing it can not be by flesh and bloud, but by the light of God, wherein there is neither lie, nor deceit:

Of the excellencie

ceit : and so consequently, that that hath bene once found true, shalbe euer true.

The work
of the rege-
neration of
Christia-
is neuer
left vnper-
fect.

For this is certaine that God, who began this worke of regeneration, will perfit it in the daye of the Lorde, and will not leaue the worke of his handes vnperfect, for his gifts and callings are without repentance, & looke what he hath once giuen, he neuer calleth it back, being faithfull & constant in his deedes, and keepeth his trueth euerlastingly, without any alteration or change, for it is impossible his worde should faile : and it can not be but Gods decree must remaine according to the election, so that whome soeuer he hath once known and appointed to saluatiō, that man can neuer fall from his saluation. The stedfastnes of his counsell is shewed to the heyres of promise that it shall endure for euer, by two thinges whiche can neuer bee changed, to witte, his worde, and his othe, whereby he hath confirmed his promises, & it is impossible he shoulde lye in them. To this purpose, Iesus Christ sayeth, that al that the father hath giuen him, shall come to him, and he will not cast out one of them that shal come to him. For this is the will of my Father, saith hee, that I leese not one of them whom my Father hath giuen me, but I wil
rayle

of a Christian man.

rayse them vp all in the latter daye. And againe, My sheepe, sayeth he, heare my voyce, and followe me, I knowe them, and giue them euerlasting life, and no man shall take them out of mine hand. So then, seeing he hath promised that that man which hath once taken liuely roote in him, shall neuer be plucked vp, all that are of the flocke of his sheepe-folde, are out of daunger to be euer cast away, because the purpose of God which he hath decreed vpon them is stedfast, and the sentence of peace is ratified to them, and therefore he taketh them apart and sayeth vnto them in this wyse: Feare not, litle flock, seeing it is giuen to you to knowe the mysterie of the kingdom of heauen: for to whomsoever the gift of beleuing is giuen, to the same man is also giuen the gift of continuance according to the vertue of y^e holy Ghost which is euerlasting, wherby the Christian man is renued, and his force remaineth for euer: for otherwise were it not continuing for euer, the grace of God, could not be alwayes sure and stable.

And on the other side, it were to great & dole the blockishnes & distrust, to doubt whether the Sonne of God in his prayers for the Elect, that their faithe might not fayle them, were heard or no, seeing he sanctified
him

Of the excellencie

himself for them, so that their hope which is as it were a sure anchze for the soule, extendeth it selfe beyonde our death: and though the infirmitie of the fleshe be great, yet seeing their fast holde hangeth not vpon their owne vertue, but vpon the vertue & strength of God, seeing their saluation is kept vnder his secret garde, as vnder a seale, and authenticall signet, they are out of all danger, written as it were, & inregistred by the Almighty and euerlasting God in the booke of life, so that all their sinnes are not able to stoppe the course of Gods election, nor quenche or diminishe the lest wyle that may be, the loue of God, seeing that euen by our verie sinnes hee taketh occasion to shewe vs farre greater loue, hee him selfe beyng vchangeable; and his decrees euerlasting, so that it is not in mans power to change his decree, nor to make him goe awaye from that which he hath once determined. And in deede, it were no meete thing for his vchangeable nature, neither might it be truely said of him, that he lighteneth men to blynde them, or buildeth to pull downe, or planteth to roote vp.

Hereby now we may euery man see that the
If true
arke of a spirit of God, is the true marke of a Chri-
istian. stian man, whereby he is known from all
other,

of a Christian man.

other, and is of greater accompt then all other: not that Spirit whereby all creatures are sustained and haue their mouing by a generall strength and vertue which is common to all liuing creatures, neither that spirit, whereby we haue diuers and sundrie giftes bestowed seuerally vpon eche of vs, but the spirit of adoption and sanctification, which the Lorde giueth to none, but to the Christian man, when he receiueth him into the number of his children, and separateth him from all other, and sundreth him from the worlde, to bring him to the hope of the euerlasting inheritance. This Spirit, is for this cause called the Spirit of sanctification, whereby the image of God is imprinted in a Christian, and serueth him for an earnest pēny of his saluation: and in deede putteth him in possession and a certaine enioying of his adoption, which is giuen him by a speciall grace of God, to bring that to passe by a secret working, which hee determined in his secret counsel to bring to passe in him, by his mightie hand, shewing him selfe to be a most gracious & louing Father by his testimonie: a greater then which, and more certaine, we can not desire, because the light and knowledge which he giueth, is accompanied with
such

Of the excellencie

such a perswasion and certaintie of spirit, and with so stedfast and assured trust of heart in his goodnes, that it maketh our vnderstanding surmount al things, clenseth and lifteth vp our hearts to heauen, and causeth vs to feele a spirituall taste of heauenly riches. And to be short, causeth a newe birth in him, and transfozmeth him: for this light which is in a Christiā mans soule, differeth very much frō all other light of knowledge, and from that kinde of faith which procedeth from the perswasion of man. For it is impossible for mans wit, to giue man such vnderstāding of knowledge and faith as this is, which is wrought in him by the mightie working of the spirit of God: and is this in summe, that the Gospel which hath no appearāce of wit nor strength, is notwithstanding a wisdom so high that it surmounteth the heauens, and is the mightie power of God to saluation to euery one y beleueth, to bring him to the kingdom of heauen: for in deede, what can there bee more strange, more foolish, more simple, or more offense to reason, then to heare a man say, that God is made & become a mortall man, that life was subiect to death, righteousnes couered with a shew of sinne, blessing subiect to curse, that by this meanes, men might be ranso-

of a Christian man.

ransomed from death, and made partakers of blessed immortallitie, to the ende they might obtaine life, & that iustice might reigne, sinne being once abolished: and last of all to the end that death it selfe and malediction might be swallowed vp, and therefore, that we haue to enter into glozie by ignominie, into felicitie by miseries, and into life by death.

And moreover that this light is farre different from all other light of knowledge and faith which proceedeth from the perswasion of man, it is needlesse to alleage any other example, the example of that faith, which is in the most part of them y^e beare the name of Christians, & yet haue nothing but y^e bare title, and beleue in Iesus Christ, because they haue bene so learned & taught from father to sonne, & are so perswaded, because they see other men y^e liue wth them, beleue so: them especially whome they take to bee the holiest, the wisest, y^e most religious, & perswade themselves y^e their heads cā not erre: So that if they had chanced to haue bene borne in any other countrie or religion, they would as easely haue bene perswaded to it as to that which nowe they holde and are perswaded is true, seeing their knowledge is gotten by reason and discourse of man, not giuen of God and
from

Of the excellencie

from aboue, but cold, fleshly, weake, and very changeable which hath no other end but a peculiar respect of his owne, and nothing lesse then to be touched with the glorie of God. Neither doe they receiue Iesus Christe for such an one, as he is offred of God the father in the Gospel by a liuely faith proper to the elect, but while they professe his name, they spoile him of his glorie, vertue, and dignitie, to transferre it to creatures and mens inuentions in steade of the Creator.

The Chri-
stian can
not be kno-
wen by the
light of
mans sense.

And therefore it foloweth, that this man which we speake of, can not be discerned fro other by any iudgement of mans sense & reason, but by a spirituall iudgement by comparing spirituall things with spirituall things: for the Christian people are but a smal flock, contemptible, scattred here one and there one in the thickest of a number that are falsely called the people of God and Christians, separate from the common order of men, and set apart as a treasure that God reserueth for him selfe, hidden and withdrawn from the sight & knowledge of men, as a fewe graines of corne vnder a great deale of chaffe in a floore: so that it is not the reputation, nobilitie, greatnes, wisdom, deuotion or other apperance that mā esteemeth (be it neuer so glorious)

rious) which we haue to respect, as S. Paul willethe the Corinth. to consider, that there are but a fewe called amongst them, a fewe wise, a fewe noble, a fewe mightie, and of authoritie after the flesh: neither haue we to respect the title, or outward profession, ne yet the outward signe of Baptisme, as it is written, All they that are of Israel, are not Israelites, nor all they Abrahams children, which are bozne of Abraham, although they haue al one selfe same marke of Circumcision: but it is the marke of the Spirit of God, which we must haue regarde vnto, seeing that all signes and appearaunces, because they are onely without, are vnprofitable, without the holy working of the inward, wherein truely consisteth the witnesse, whereby a Christian man may knowe him self. And the first effect of this inward vertue of God, is that which the Scripture calleth Adoption, which is not common to al the world, as Iesus Christ giueth vs to vnderstand, saying, That hee prayeth not the Father for the world, but for them, whom the Father hath giuen him, as it is said in an other place, That the prayse of that adoption is not of men, but of God, according to his good pleasure and grace giue in Christ, before the foundations of the world

The onely
marke of
the spirit of
God, cau-
seth vs to
knowe a
Christian.

were layde . So that, euen as it is saide that Christ dwelleth in vs by the spirit of God, euen so doth man knowe , and is knowen to be a Christian, by the feloweship of the same spirit , as by that marke wherewith the heauenly Father sealeth and marketh the heart of his elect in assurance of their adoption, and whereby he knoweth them , whome he hath quickened from heauen by his most secret vertue , which no sense of man is able to perceiue, being in it selfe verie high and of great maiestie, & in outward appearance vile & beggerly, whereby euery Christiā man hath such a conformitie with Christ, that as the world did not know him, so neither is he knowen to the world, for as much as y^e world which hath receiued nothing but the spirit of the world, hath no vnderstanding of those things which saue of y^e spirit of God. For, saith S. Paul, eue as no man knoweth y^e things that are in mā, but only y^e spirit of man, euen so no mā knoweth the things of God, but the spirit of God.

Howe a
man may
knowe
that he is
a Christiā.

So then, a man can not iudge , no not of him self, whether he be a Christian or no, vntlesse it be by the light of this spirit of God y^e is giuen him, as S. Iohn witnesseth speaking in the persone of euerie Christian, saying after this sort : Whereby we knowe y^e God dwelleth

leth in vs, euen by the holy Ghost whome he hath giuen vs. And this he sayeth vpon certaine knowledge, & not by gessing, according to that that S. Paul sayeth, That the same spirit beareth recorde with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and that it is not by the spirit of the worlde, but by the spirit of God, that we knowe those things which are giuen vs of God, to witte, our adoption, and hope of euerlasting life, and more, that we are able to saye and to saye truely, that they are none of Christes which haue not this inward witnes of the spirit: and againe, that they beare about them a witnes and condemnatiō against them selues, which doubt whether they possesse Christ and be of his bodie or no, hauing no assurance by certaintie of faith, to be out of doubt and vpon sure ground both for this present and for the time to come, and such faith as Iesus Christ assureth vs, that al that are his shall haue, saying in this wise to his Apostles, the spirit of trueth which the worlde can not receiue, because it seeth him not, ne knoweth him, but you know him, for he dwelleth in you, and shalbe in you. And in deede seeing that continuance is a necessarie thing for saluation, what faith were it if it had not with it assurance and certaintie to

Faith is not without assurance of continuance

Of the excellencie

continue: Nowe the trueth is so, that who-
soeuer hath the gift of faith to beleue, hath
also the gift of perseuerance to continue, con-
sidering that faith is not a persuation for a
day, and a thing that sodenly vanisheth away,
but a stedfast and well rooted persuation in
the heart to continue al the life long, as Saint
Paul boasteth boldly in many places of his
election, and persuadeth other to do the like,
vpon a glozie which is not groundeed vpon
any thing that is in man, but in the goodnes
of God, saying, That he knoweth, whom he
beleueth, and that he is one of them, whom
Christ came to saue, that he wayteth for the
Croune of glozie, and is sure that nothing
can separate him from the loue of God in Je-
sus Christ, as one that was chosen before the
foundation of the worlde was layed. Which
thing fleshly men can not doe, because they
knowe not what the spirit of God meaneth,
being not regenerate, and for that cause ha-
uing so base an heart, so vile, & abiect through
sinne, that they can not persuade them selues
that God loued them so well, as to saue them
by the death of his onely and derely beloued
sonne: and that he was so liberall, as to giue
them paradise, vnesse they deserue it by their
workes and merites, where as the regene-
rate

of a Christian man.

rate haue within them such a feeling of the
loue of God in Christe, that they see them
selues out of doubt most assuredly saued in
him, and can not perswade them selues that
Christe, to whom the Father hath giuen all
power to iudge, can pronounce sentence a-
gainst those his brethren and members, for
whom he died vpon the Crosse.

This Christian mā hath a certaine know-
ledge by the effects which the same spirit of
God bringeth forth in him, that he hath this
gift of faith, for as soone as hee causeth him
through his vertue and mightie working to
feele a peace and vspeakeable rest in his cō-
science, that appeaseth, contenteth and satisfi-
feth it, he mainteineth him in a spiritual ioy,
increaseth the studie of good workes in him,
inflameth him in y^e loue of God, maketh him
delight in his word, & in the same word to be-
hold the face of God, gracious, louing, and
fauourable, with such an assurance of his
grace, that he reioyceth and triumpheth with
a bolde & cherefull countenance in the hope
of euerlasting glorie, in so much that hee is
not afrayed to present him selfe before his
God, and call vpon him as his Father, with
perfect assurance to obtaine at his handes
whatsoever is necessarie for him: which were

Man know-
weth him-
selfe to be
Christian
by the ef-
fects of
Gods spi-
rit in him

Of the excellencie

impossible for him to do, if he were not moued & enforced thereunto through some heavenly and diuine working, which surmounteth all the force and strength that is or can be in man. For from whence might this assurance of the good will of God procede, and that the man is colde and altogether senselesse of him selfe, voyde of al motiō or bent to praye to him, could be moued to repaire vnto him with such a confidence, and yet godly notwithstanding, hauing grievously offended him, were it not through his diuine and heavenly working: which the Christian man may easely perceyue moreouer by this, that it engendzeth in him a loue of Iustice, and on the other side, a hatred of sinne, by an alteration of affections, pleasures and displeasures for other then before, to witte, such as are in all them, whose eyes the Prince of this worlde hath blinded. And yet notwithstanding trueth it is that he feeleth a continuall combat of the spirit and the flesh in him selfe, which hindereth him from perfecting his workes, but yet so it is, y though sinne dwell in him, yet it doeth not reigne in him. And such are the effectes, whereby the Christian man commeth to the experience and feeling of his faich, & so consequently of his election.

For

of a Christian man.

For a Christian man striveth not to enter into the Sanctuarie of Gods wisdom to informe him selfe of Gods predestination, & secret counsell, as some rashe headed & more bold then godly wyle wil needes intrude and thrust in them selues most arrogantly in to the secretes of God, finding nothing in the ende, but a maze which they are neuer able to get out of: for neyther is it meete that the height of the wisdom of God shoulde bee subiect to the sense of man, to seeke it out euen to his everlastingnes. But the Christian being once come to the way of faith, and holding himselfe stedfastly there, is led from step to step euen to the King of heauens chamber, as S. Augustine speaketh, there to behold the treasure of his Election, and yet for all that doeth not become thereby negligent and dissolute, but cleane contrarie, doeth after that more diligently applie him selfe to God, to be his instrument of righteousness, continuing most reuerently to make his Election more steady and sure by good works, which God hath prepared for his Elect to walke in.

Man is
not made
negligent
by know-
ing that h
is chosen
to lyfe.

But we must vnderstande that this light which is in the children of God, whereby they haue this knowledge in the selues that

Of the excellencie.

To know
in an other
beside him
selfe, whe-
ther he be a
Christian
or no.

they are Christians, reacheth to no further assurance then of them selues: for they are not able to knowe assuredly of an other man that that they knowe to be in them selues, by reason of that hypocrisie that is naturally in the heart of mā, wholly disguysed and sealed with a thousand kinde of maskings, wherewith he deceiueth not onely other men, but him selfe also: and mozeouer because this priuiledge of sounding mens hearts, & knowing men within, belongeth properly to God alone, who hath reserued to him selfe the knowledge of his, as hee keepeth them close vnder his seale, as Saint Paul saith, yea at such time as when they do not as yet eyther knowe him, or them selues. Surely the sight of man is to weake to enter so farre as to iudge assuredly whether the seede of the worde of God bee rooted deepe ynough in any mans heart to remayne there. And to the ende hee should not rashly take so much vpon him, God hath taken a good order for it, warning vs daily by experience, how farre his secret iudgements passe our capacitie: for oftentimes we see those men brought into the right waye, which seemed to vs to be vtterly cast away and lost children. As on the other side, we see a number fall, which seemed to vs

of a Christian man.

to vs to stand very fast, being true as S. Augustine saith, That according to the secret and hidden counsell of God, there are many sheepe without the Church, & many wolues within. And in deede there is in a number such a likelyhood and resemblance of a Christian, vnder a cloke of hypocrisie, that they seeme to haue the selfe same beginning and ground of faith, which the Christian hath, which causeth vs that we can not iudge of them aright as we should. For moreouer & beside that they haue the self same name that the other haue, and bee likewise in the selfe same companie, make profession of one selfe same doctrine, receiue y^e same Sacraments, they are sometimes touched with some taste of the worde of God, and do reuerence it, yea and that so farre forth y^e they thinke it great impietie to contemne it and despise it: and haue moreouer such a taste of heauēly gifts, as the Apostle him selfe witnesseth in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, that they seeme both to them selues and to other that see them, to be no lesse accounted of then the rest of the faithfull. And yet it falleth out so in the ende, that they shewe them selues to bee nothing lesse then Christians; thus deceiuing them selues within them selues, because they can
not

The hypocrisie of the false Christian hath great affinity with the true.

Of the excellencie

not thoroughly examine them selues in their hearts, nor make good pꝛooꝛe of them selues whether Christ dwell in them or no, so full of vanitie is the heart of man.

The difference be-
twene the
true and
counter-
feite Chri-
stian.

For thus it is, that the seede of the worde of God hath not life in them to continue and dwell there without corruption: though it seeme to haue taken roote in them, yet it is not liuely, so that, the taste which they get of the goodnes of God, is but for a whyle, and yet that to very confused, and very irresolute: and in like sort, in that that God lighteneth their vnderstandings and maketh them know his grace, it is without ingrauing that true efficacie in them, which is imprinted in Christians heart, which they neuer knew, because they receyue not the vertue of the Spirit of God in deede, ne haue the true clearenes of faith but onely to serue them for greater condemnation, and make them voyde of all excuse. And in that that God entreteth into their heartes, it is to no other ende but that his bountie and trueth may be known to them by the Spirit of vnderstanding, without further communicating with them, the Spirit of adoption. And this is the matter, why though want of ablenes to comprehend his vchangeable will, they can not
con-

of a Christian man.

constantly embrace his trueth to haue more
then a light and fly knowledge of it, nor haue
an earnest desire to loue God heartily as his
children do. Hereof it followeth, that a man
can no more knowe certainly, whether an o-
ther man be a true Christian or no, then he
can in a ground sowed with diuers seedes,
knowe one seede from another, which shall
bryng forth fruit & which shal not, yea though
it haue already put forth, yea and that more
is, though it be al eared. Therefore euen as
Solon sayed to Cresus King of Lydia, that no
man is to be counted happie before his dea-
thes day, because of many miseries and cala-
mities which may befall him: euen so I say,
that no one man can know an other man tho-
rowly to be a Christian, (which is the grea-
test felicitie that is) before the end of his race.
And for this ende & purpose Iesus the sonne
of Sirach warneth vs to iudge of no man be-
fore his death, because, sayeth he, that is the
time wherein a man sheweth what hee hath
bene al his life long. For some shewe euident
tokens, that they were neuer other before
God but Christians, though whyle they li-
ued, they neuer made any shewe of it: other
some, y they were neuer Christians, though
they made shewe of that profession a great
num-

It is im-
possible to
know
who is a
true Chri-
stian be-
fore he dye.

Of the excellencie

number of peres : for witnes whereof, let vs take Judas on the one side, and the thief that was hanged with Christ on the other . This is a point which we must alwayes haue recourse vnto, that such as God hath chosen to be true Christians, shalbe true Christians, what malice and vnbeliefe soeuer they bee presently giuen vnto : and they also on the other side, of whome he hath foreseene that they shail be wicked and infidels, shalbe such be they neuer so good and of a true profession at this instant : for hee is a Christian alwayes, which hath bene foreknownen and appointed befoze from the beginning to be a Christian.

A Christian
man may
be knownen
by the iud-
gement of
charitie, &
howe:

So then it appeareth that there is great difference betweene that iudgement which a Christian man may make of him selfe, and that iudgement which hee can make of an other man, because the certeintie of faith remaineth shut vp within, and stretcheth not so farre as to be knownen in other, seeing that the Spirit of God beareth all the elect witnessse of their calling . But as for an other man, we knowe not howe to iudge of him, saue onely by the outwarde man, which is often times verie deceiueable . And yet notwithstanding by the iudgement of charitie
we

of a Christian man.

we may accompt him for a Christian, in whom we finde, (so farre as the eye of man is able to reache) the seede of the worde not to be fruitlesse, that is to saye, that the preaching of the Gospel is not only in worde, but in vertue of the holy Ghost, considering that where we see the signes of Gods election as we take them, there we haue occasiō to hope well, and not defraude our neighbour of a charitable, friendly, and louing iudgement. For moreouer and beside that the good nature which ought to be in a Christian, leadeth vs to hope well of all men, S. Paul writing to the Thessalonians, is so bolde as to assure them, that their election is of God, speaking as it were vpon a certaintie of knowledge grounded vpon notable signes and markes of the vertue of the holy Ghost, which he sa-
eth, he sawe in them, by euident effectes of faith, the carefull and painefull charitie to-
wardes their neighbours, the sure hope and stedfast continuance in wayting for the ma-
nifestation of Iesus Christe, with patience which surmounteth all wearines both of the length of time, and of all afflictions of the world whatsoeuer. The like he doeth parti-
cularly in Timothies respect, to whome hee writeth, That he assureth him selfe that faith
and

Of the excellencie

and true religion dwelleth in him, iudging
so of the certeintie of the cause which is hid-
den to all men, by the apparant effects there-
of, euē as if it were visible. And so we in like
sorte, by a charitable iudgement, may iudge,
or at the least, perswade our selues wel of our
brethren, in whom we perceiue like fruites
and actions of the Spirit of God, to take and
account them for Christians. For as we
iudge by the outward motions of the bodie,
that there is a soule in the bodie: so may we
perceiue by his workes whether the spirit of
God be in man or no, seeing that euen as the
soule which liueth not idle within mans bo-
die, sheweth it self by that vertue and vigour
which it distributeth to the members, and to
eche part of the bodie: euen so the Spirit of
God that is in man, is not idle but sheweth
what power it is of, in the man in whome it
is: and sheweth it selfe effectually by a con-
formitie with Christ who liueth in him, and
giueth life to his members which hee com-
municateth with them, and powreth out vpo
them by the vertue of his Spirit, which is,
as you would say, the general soule of all the
childre of God, not respecting the substance,
but the grace: so that, euen as we thinke that
the grasse is well ioyned to the substance of
the

the tree which it is grafted into, when we see it bring forth fruite out of the same tree, by that strength which it receiueth of the same roote: euen so we know that a man is truly ingrafted and made one bodie with Christe, when through one selfe same force of the Spirit, he bringeth forth fruite in Christ.

But as for the knowledge of a reprobate To know
a reprobate
man. man, it is a thing so secret and hidde to men, that they can neuer iudge of it certainly, vnllesse they haue some extraordinarie reuelation: for be it y we finde neuer so euil signes and tokens in any man, what is he that can tell whether God haue reserued mercy for him in store or no, vnto the latter ende of his life, though he haue spent it wholly in wickednesse: Therefore seeing in deede it was not expediēt nor meete for vs to haue knowledge to discerne the one from the other, lest that thereby we shoulde become to colde in charitie towarde all, as we owe to all, as though all men were our brethren in Christ, it is sufficient that this chaffe shall bee separate from the corne at the latter daye. So then this onely remayneth, that we knowe distinctly & particularly, what the operations of the holy Ghost in man are, because there is no other way to knowe a Christian man
out-

outwardly by, but by them.

To know
a Christiā
man by the
outward
effectes of
the holy
Ghost in
him.

And seeing it is so as we haue saide, that a Christiā man, is a man made a new creature as touching his nature, by a second birth, it is euident, that that can not be done vnlesse the first nature die, and this man put of the fleshe, that is to saie, his first nature which is corrupt, euen that which we bring with vs from our mothers wombes, which is called the old man. For he can not in any wyle be capable of the kingdome of heauen, vnlesse he be destroyed and brought to naught by the sword of the Spirit, to the ende that death may make a riddance of all the operations of the fleshe, which sinne woorketh in him. For as long as we are Adams children, and nothing els but men, we are such slaues to sinne, that we can do nothing but sinne, vntill we be made new men by the death of the first man, and haue passed by meanes of the communication of the death of Christ to the participation of his life. These two pointes, to wit, Mortification, and Viuification, which can not be separate the one from the other, are out of doubt the chiefest operations of the holy Ghost in a Christiā man: so that, euen as Christe dyed to destroye sinne, passing by death to euerlasting life, in that fleshe which he

Mortifica-
tion and
Sanctifi-
cation, two
of the chiefest effects
of the Spirit of God
in a Christiā.

he tooke of vs: euen so this man is dead in him self, and renued to a better life, accompanied with meete and conuenient workes for it: and such as may witnes that he is a true member of Christ, by casting downe of him selfe, of his own wisdom, and reason, and al his affections and passions, which casting downe of him self proceedeth from a liuely taste and feeling of the goodnes of our heauenly Father, whereby man is knowen to be Gods chylde, and inheritour of all his blessings: for this can not be, but forthwith his vyle, base, carnall and earthly affections vanish away & become dead in him, by reason of the great light of faith, which darkeneth & putteth out all the false light of our corrupt nature.

Wherefore, a Christian man doeth then in deede shewe him selfe to be a right Christian, when the death of Christ, which hath a certaine force in it to expell and cast out the wickednes of our fleshe, and his resurrection whereby there is raised vp in vs the state and condition of a better nature, shew their fruite in him, as by Baptisme we are made partakers of this grace. So that all knowledge of Iesus Christe, that hath not this vertue to followe it, is naked and bare, and all baptisme without it vnprofitable and nothing worth:

Of the excellencie

for there commeth no man to Christe, or is receiued into the grace of Christ, but the efficacy of his death appeareth in him, and beareth about a shewe and token of it in him by mortification of the fleshe, and quickening of the spirit, as hauing passed out of this first nature, into the nature of Christ by a spiritual renewing, which sheweth it selfe by framing the course of our life anewe, wherein who so is foremost, sheweth that he hath profited most in the knowledge of God: And we may not thinke that the benefit of the death and resurrection of Iesus Christ belongeth to any other, saue onely to them which shew forth a new life, & of a right affection of heart, some sooner, some later, giue them selues to holynes and cleannes, wherein standeth the band of the coniunction that is betweene God and vs, and the certayne badge and marke of a Christian man, whereby the children of God, as S. Iohn sayeth, are knowne from the children of the deuill.

Holines of
life is a
marke of a
Christian.

For which cause, Iesus Christ speaking of this sanctificatiō to his Apostles, as of a true marke whereby his are knowne, sayd, that it is the wedding garment, whereby as by the bridegromes cloth and liuerie, those that are bidden to the mariage feast are knowē from other.

of a Christian man.

other. And the Apostle saith to the same purpose, that without this cleannes no man can see God, nor be ioyned to him, to cleaue fast to him. And it is impossible for y^e spirit of adoption to be in one, but the spirit of sanctification must also needes be in him: for by it, it is that the faithful are called Saints, as sanctified and made holy of God, consecrated & set apart from prophane & common vse, & separated from all earthly filthines & defiling of the flesh, as the vessels, garments, temples, & sweet smelling sacrifices were, which might not be applied to any other vse, but that that was holy & dedicate to the glorie of God. For it is meete y^e they that are lightened with the doctrine of saluation, should shewe them selues an other sort of men, then they that walke after y^e vanitie of their owne braines, being ouercouered with darknes, because they neuer felt any light of trueth: so that to finde an holy mā in deede (which is the Christian man) we neede not seeke him in an hermitage or desert, or in some close place that is walled about, separate from the conuersation and common life of men, either in garments, meate, ceremonies, or what other obseruation soeuer of corruptible things, and other forme of holines inuented by men, with a kinde of wisdom

An holy
man.

in superstition and humblenes of spirit, and contempt of the bodie vnder a cloke of fained obedience, pleasant in shew to mans reason: but in the onely working of the holy Ghost, which transformeth soules into that holines which he hath him selfe, and frameth them in such wise to newe thoughts and affections, that we may wel say, they are other then they were befoze, as wrought in his knoweledge and to his image that made them.

Which thing appeareth not onely within through an inward and spirituall feeling of a pure conscience cleansed from wicked affections, assisted therunto with a feare of God, and faith, and hope, and patience, and inuocation: but also without through a continuall exercise of godlines, voyde of all superstition, which might lessen or darken the glorie of God, by giuing that to other which is proper to him: as also by peace and ioy of conscience, meekenes, goodnes, vpright dealing, iustice, sobrenes, temperancie, and other fruites of the Spirit, contrarie to the fruites of the flesh, which are, vncleannes, filthines, idolatrie, sectes, heresies, dissolutenes, enimities, seditions, outrages, murders, theftes, and other such like, which are contrarie to brotherly charitie, which Iesus Christ telleth vs, is
an

of a Christian man.

an other marke and token, wherby they that are his are marked and knowen to be his disciples: not onely by a common loue towards all men, as all men are one fleshe, and all created and fashioned to the image of God, but also by a speciall and mutuall loue the one towards the other, so much the more straight and precise, by howe much the image of God shineth more clearly in them, whom he hath before regenerate.

Charitie a
marke of
Christians.

And therfore, as by mortifying of him self, the Christiā man forgetteth him self, & whatsoever is about him, to liue in God, referring the partes of his life to him, as to their onely end, without further searche of things that please him selfe, but suche onely as please him, and as he well liketh of for the aduancement of his glorie: and so by this way and effect of mortification, he casteth of all consideration of him selfe, and layeth aside all fleshly affectiō to giue him self wholly to his neighbour, and preferreth the profit of his neighbour, before any respect of him self: So that this loue is an other maner of loue, then that naturall loue which is common to all men, which is nothing els, to speake truely, but a loue of our selues, accordingly as euery man is inclined to haue a care of him selfe, and so

A difference
betweene
Charitie &
the loue of
our selues.

Of the excellencie

to seeke his owne profite and gayne: neither is there any more agreement betwene the, then is betweene fyre and water, for the loue of our selues keepeth all our senses so well occupied, that this Christian and brotherly loue, is wholly banished. And therefore Saint Iohn sayeth plainly, That all they that haue a right feeling of it, knowe that they are passed from death to life, and they that haue no feeling of it, remaine in death, that is to saye, they that are not regenerate.

And in deede, the bonde of perfection consisteth in loue, for loue is the marke and ende whereat the Lawe shooteth, and wherein the end of sanctification standeth, as whereby euery one of vs hath to witnes to the worlde, what loue we beare to God, whom we loue in our brethren. Considering that this loue is so ioyned and coupled with the loue of God, that it can in no wyse be separate from it, because it procedeth from the loue of God, as the effect from the cause: and in this it is, to be short, wherein standeth the right rule of life, whereby the Christian man frameth all his actions, and moderateth the right vse of the giftes of God. And therefore whatsoeuer is not squared by it, is false, and all vertues be they neuer so excellent, are without it, not

it, nothing els but a wynde that puffeth men
 vp with pryde and vanitie, and a vaine pain-
 ting or vnprofitable sound, that is to saye, a
 thing of nothing, and that more is, a stin-
 king and abominable thing before God.

And therefore we must not thus thinke of a Christian man, that hee is a man with-
 drawen aside from all other men, liuing in a
 solitarie place, or so dedicate to a contem-
 platine life, as they call it, as that thereby he
 is distract from such actions of conuersation,
 as are behoueaible and necessarie for the in-
 terteinment of the societie of men: Seeing
 that men are bozne one for an other, to com-
 municate one with an other for the mainte-
 nance of the societie of mankinde, and not to
 bereue our neighbours of that duetie wee
 owe them, if we will not be taken for theeves
 before God: Considering that we were not
 placed here in this world, to liue solitarily as
 wylde and brute beastes, but to liue amongst
 companie, and to make other men partakers
 of that which God hath bestowed vpon eche of
 vs, and there is nothing wherein men are
 said to followe God so muche in, as in em-
 ploying them selues charitably one for ano-
 ther, for the profit of one an other, as in deede
 that vertue is the best of all, that is profita-

A Christian
 man with-
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The Chri-
stian man
employeth
him self to
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of life, both
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publicke.

The pri-
uate state.

Therefore the Christian, is a man that hath daily conuersation with other men, that applieth him selfe indifferently to all conditions and trades of life, whereunto he findeth him selfe rightly called, and therein employeth him selfe faithfully to the profit of the societie of mankinde, whether it be in respect of a private life and the dealings thereunto belonging, or in regarde of the common weale, which is to bee folowed without his owne house: So that as a sonne he rendereth the duetie of obedience and subiection to his father and mother, and helpeth them as much as he can: as a seruant, he sheweth him selfe seruiceable to his master, & diligent to please him, as of a free and willing heart, seruing God and not man: as on the other side, if he be a master, he entreateth his seruants gently, and is not too rigorous and churlishe towards them, hauing alwayes an eye to God, as to the Lord and Master of all: and if he be a Father, he bleth his children louingly and gently as is meete for their persones, traineth vp and frameth their liues in good manners: and last, if he be an husband, he rendereth that beneuolence, that is due vnto his wife, for we may not thinke, that this man is of
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the number of those, which forsake the remedie that God hath established for auoiding of fornication, and wil needes vpon an headines ouercome the necessitie of nature, rashly assuring them selues that God will helpe them, which he promisseth to none but to the that walke in his wayes, ne giueth the gift of continencie at all tymes to all men.

Moreouer the order and frame of an household, is so well perceiued in the house of a Christian, that he him self as Pastoure of his familie, instructeth it diligently in the feare of God, and keepeth it in good and godlie discipline by continuall exercise in godlines. So that in his house, you shall finde the chaste wife, the shamefaced, plaine, & modest wife, decked without as she is within, no painted nor masked thing, rendering true obedience to her husband, and hauing an eye vpon her familie, her seruants, her children: the master, father, and husbando, euerie one in his degree employing him selfe sincerely in his duetie and office, approuing his doings as before God.

And as for other offices & dealings which are not household matters, and are without his house, as an inferiour and subiect, he reuerēceth the higher powers, and submitteth him

The mul-
blique stat

him self willingly to them, as to Gods ordinances, whose minde is by this order, to gouerne the worlde and keepe the state of mankinde in peace and tranquillitie, payeth them their tributes and dueties, and submitteth him selfe freely and frankely to obey their lawes and commandements, not onely for necessities sake, because he can not resist the without danger of being punished for it, but also for conscience sake, bound to do it by the word of God. He honoureth the Ministers & Pastours of the Church, as Gods messengers, and sheweth him selfe readie and frameable to their teaching, frequenteth the holy assemblies, and vseth all meanes he can, that are profitable to nourishe and mainteine the seruice of God. And againe, as superiour and placed in higher rowme aboue oether, he hath a care to execute his charge faithfully, to defende the good, punish y^e wicked, as all power and authoritie of man, is bound to serue the commoditie and profit of the subiects. If he be a Pastour, he ministreth the word of God faithfully, and marreth not the doctrine of saluation, he keepeth it in his puritie, and instructeth the people both in good doctrine & in good example of life, and vsurpeth no rule or violent and tyrannous Lordlines ouer his felowes

of a Chriltian man.

felowes nor inferiours, but seketh the commoditie and profite of all them that he hath charge of.

So then the condition of all men is this, where that they are mutually bounde one to another, so that none of vs may exempt him selfe from subiection, and therefore wheresoeuer there is loue of one toward an other, there is also interchangeable seruice. The highest Kings and Princes that are, are not exempt from it, for God hath placed them in preeminence to serue, as the members of the bodie, what preeminence and prerogatiue soeuer the one hath ouer the other, yet notwithstanding serue one an other, vsing such powers as God hath put in them, to the profit of the whole bodie, receiuing no other commoditie but that which ariseth of the profite of the whole, and is powred out vpon the whole bodie.

where there is mutual charitie, there also mutual seruitude.

And for this cause, the Christiā man hath his eyes alwayes bent vpon his vocation, as vpon a principle and ground whereby to gouerne him self aright, necessarie in al things to keepe the right waye, taketh heede he do not ambitiously and rashlye take vpon him many and sondrie charges and offices together, that he attempt not more then his calling

The Christian lo-
keth al-
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his calli

Of the excellencie

ling will beare, and medleth not rashly with those things which do nothing cōcerne him, but contenteth him selfe with his present cōdition, whatsoeuer it be, whether great or small, rich or poore, honourable or base, he followeth it and continueth in it constantly, and passeth not his bounds, nor changeth it without iust cause. For his affections are ruled, and he bridleth his natural and inordinate desires which couet commonly more then man hath, measuring his sufficiencie by the will of God, which he knoweth by that that befall-eth him: and taketh all as from him, and by his prouidence, whereunto he referreth the whole conduct of him selfe, and whatsoeuer concerneth him, so that he will do nothing, nor take ought vpon him of his owne head, but as a simple toole and instrument submit- teth him selfe to the conduct of his master and workeman, who is the Lord of all.

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in is cō-
t with
state.

And therfore in what state soeuer he finde him self, either high or lowe, rich or poore, he beareth him selfe alwayes moderatly and as it were, in an euen balance. Having aboun- dance of richesse, honours, and heauenly bles- sings, plentifully powred vpon his soule, hee easely frameth him selfe to beare him self after one sorte in what soeuer state may be-
fall

of a Christian man.

fall him in this present life, making nothing
so great accompt of earthly and transitorie
things, as men commonly do verie vaine-
ly and foolishly. To be short, the Christian
man, is a vessel of honour, sanctified to euerie
good worke, and a man that walketh after
the spirit, and not after the flesh, and as Iesus
Christ sayth, that bringeth forth good things
out of the treasure of his heart and spirituall
vertue that is in him. For he is the good tree
which is knowen by his good fruite it bea-
reth. And a man cladde with the garment of
light, that walketh honestly as at midday in
all mens eyes, beeing a paterne of good
workes, and a lampe lightened with the spi-
rit of God, that shineth in the darkenes of the
world by purenes of life, in whom there is
not one piece or portiō of his life, but yeldeth
a good and sweete sauour of holines and loue
to the glorie of God, and profit of his neigh-
bour, whether we marke his talke, which is
poudered with salt, accordingly as the worde
of God dwelleth plentifully in him, and with
such a grace, that he is able to drawe his hear-
ers by reason of the commoditie and profit
that commeth by his talke, either to his mo-
dest behauiour, being very meeke and graue,
or to his actions which tende to nothing but
to

The qua-
lities of a
Christian

Of the excellencie

to goodnes & honestie befoze men, labouring by his good conuersation to edifie all men to the aduancement of their saluation. And all this he doeth, because he feeleth within himselfe that hee is called to so highe a degree of honour as to be the childe of God, which moueth him with great earnestnes, and zeale of spirit to do an infinite sort of good woꝝkes to the glozie of God, and to frame him self to be manered and facioned as becommeth so high a state as he is placed in.

Of the
marke of
the crosse.

And though these markes may seeme to be sufficient to knowe a true Christian by, yet notwithstanding beside those markes of holines and charitie, there is the marke of the crosse, farre more apparant and to be perceived in the sight of man, to teache vs more plainly that the knowing of a Christian mā standeth in the mortification of the outward man outwardly, as the former did in the inward man. And yet both the one and the other proceede out of one head, which is the fellowship we haue with Christe, which can not be separate frō the crosse. If for this cause the doctrine of the Gospel is called the woꝝd of the Crosse, because the woꝝlde doeth for the most parte hate it, as the wisdom of man is wholly cōtrarie to the wisdom of God:
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of a Christian man.

the one seeking Gods glorie, the other, the glorie of the flesh, which is so much the more enemy to the first, because the light of y^e Gospel discovereth the darknes of it, & the trueth of the Gospel maketh manifest and bringeth to light the errours and lies of the flesh. And because the world can not indure it, and seeth that it can not mainteine it self in credit, by y^e way of trueth and peace, it striveth to do it by the way of lying, cogging, and violence, as it is in deede a lier & murderer: so that they that are accompted and taken for the wisest, the discretest, of greatest power and holines, are sometimes the first that band them selues against the trueth of God, as they that feelee them selues most greeued. And therfore the Jewes did more hainously a great deale persecute Christ then the Gentiles, & amongst them the Pharises and high Priests more then the common people: and so at this day, the chiefest among the false Christians and members of Antichriste, are enemies to Christ, more then other, so that the saying of saint Paul is founde true in all times, That they which are after the flesh, alwayes persecute the, that are after the spirit. For though they do not imprison all, nor banish all, nor confiscate all Christians goods, nor burne
all,

Of the excellencie

all, nor behead all, nor hang all, yet at the least wyle, there are fewe that scape their scoffes and mockes, their reuiles and tantes, their gnashing of teeth and shaking their heads at them. For this is a sure saying and worthy to be receyued, that all that will liue faythfullye in Iesus Christe, must suffer persecution.

The condition of the Christian is to beare the crosse.

So that all the children of God haue this condition layed vpon them, to beare the crosse of Christ, as men appointed to it, by the wyll of the heauenly Father, who hath decreed this with him selfe to obserue this order and meanes in gouerning his childre, that he will exercise them in this life with diuers crosses: and for that cause Iesus Christ him selfe the elder brother was consecrate by afflictions, and so entred into the preferment of saluation. And so must all they that followe him, beare the same liuerie and cognisance vpon them, as he him selfe shewed plaine inough, saying to his Apostles, No man can be said to be his disciple, but hee that taketh vp his crosse and followeth him. And in an other place, That the childre of God shalbe knowen from other by this, that the worlde shall hate them, as he was hated first. And in deede if we looke vpon Abraham the paterne of our faith,

of a Christian man.

faith, which is a sufficient example for vs, so Abraham that we neede not alleage any other, we may see that the promise of adoption was no sooner made him, but hee was by and by commaunded to depart from his house, and forsake his parentes, his owne countrie, and other commodities, to be a pilgryme and a stranger vpon the earth, subiect to a perpetuall kinde of crosse. And surely that man can not haue a certain ppoofe within himself, that he is a Christian, that is vnwilling to be subiect to this state and condition, which the master, and head, and Lord of al, was willingly subiect to, for vs all, and who is a liuely patterne for vs to folowe.

For the free adoption, wherein consisteth mens saluation, can not be separate from Gods euerlasting decree, which hath made all his children subiect to beare the Crosse: and because there shalbe none inheritour of heauen, which is not first made like to the only sonne of God. For as he hath y^e chiefest & best place amongst all the children of God, as amongst men, the eldest sonne beareth the name of the house: so is he appointed to be their paterne, by whome they must be framed as it were by line and square, to the end they refuse nothing which he was subiect vnto: and that in

Confor=
mitie to
Christ by
the Crosse

Of the excellencie

so doing, they may euery one in his place, be ioyned & coupled together with their head, who is placed in the highest degree, not only to be aboue all, but also to holde all them that are coupled together with him vnder one self same marke of brotherhoode and honour. And as Kings and Princes of this worlde, haue their honours and praises, wherewith they crowne the noble and valiant actes of their souldiers: so this soueraigne King and Prince Iesus Christ honoureth them with his markes, whome he vseth in matters of great weight, to the ende they may appeare glorious with him aboue the rest.

**A differēce
betweene
the crosse of
the Chri-
stians, and
the world-
ly crosses.**

Hereby it appeareth, how farre this marke of the crosse which is proper to the Christiāns differeth from that which al the world tasteth of, seing the case standeth so, y there is no mā can say, that he is exempt from miserie, affliction, & trouble in this life. For where as the other which all men taste of, is a signe of the curse of God to the wicked, this crosse which is sanctified of God, is a signe of blessing, and wholsom for them that beare it, & therefore they should be deceiued y should thinke, that they which suffer in this warfare against sin, should be thought to suffer for sinne, as the worldlings do in their sufferāces: cōsidering
that

of a Christian man,

that by this crosse, God procureth the salu- God pro-
cureth our
saluatiō by
the Crosse
tion of his people, vsing it as an instrument &
help fit for the aduancing of regeneration be-
gun in the, both to beate down the foolish and
vaine confidence of the flesh, and to breake in
pieces the vail of hypocrisie, which is natu-
rally in it, & also to bridle his intemperancie.
For the whole nature of man is so prone to
boast it selfe proudly & presumptuously of his
vertue & sufficiencie, y^e it is needefull to shew
him his frailetie, as it were with the finger &
before his eyes, to the ende he may be hum-
bled and brought to a more true and certaine
knowledge of him selfe by a liuely feeling of
his febleness, and learne to cal for strength frō
the Lord, as Ionas did, saying, I remembred
the Lord when my soule was in anguish: and
David, when I was in tribulation, I cryed to
the Lord: for it fareth so with men, as it do-
eth with the sea, which would be infected and
stinke, if it were not troubled with y^e windes: A compa-
rison of mā
with y^e sea.
so would men be naught, if they were not
sometimes tossed with afflictions.

And therefore as y^e worldly crosse serueth The crosse
serueth for
a certaintie
of our elec-
tion.
the world for a witnes of his condemnation,
so this crosse being sanctified is an assurance
and certaintie to the elect of their election,
adoption, & fellowship they haue with Christ,

Of the excellencie

Jesus
Christ suffereth
in his
members.

the rest of his afflictions being accomplished in them, as members and part of him. For as Christ suffered once in him selfe, so suffereth he daily in his members, as the head suffereth with the parts of the bodie. And so his members are made like to him by the same triall of obedience, with such a grace, that moreover and beside they are quit and exempt from those paines which all men deserue generally for their sinnes, they are honourably marked with the markes and badges of his sonne, for that the Father appointed they should be afflicted for his name. And whereas he might by good reason haue made them suffer more grievously, yea as shamefull thieues, murderers, robbers, and euill doers, he maketh the suffer as innocents, laying vpon the the person of his sonne, and causeth them to suffer for his sake.

God taketh no pleasure in the afflictions of his, but chastiseth them for their profite.

And though notwithstanding al this, they be subiect to al miseries which al men taste of indifferently, both good and euil, yea & worse punished then other, in so much that if a man would compare their afflictions with other mens; a man would thinke there were none so bad as they: and that God doeth (as a man would say) spare the wicked, in comparison of his rigour which he sheweth toward his: yet we

of a Christian man.

We may not thinke y^e God taketh a pleasure in their torments, and as some prophane mē say, that he maketh but a sport and pastime of it when he so afflicteth men, hauing cast of the care and prouidēce of mens affaires. But on the contrarie side, because God iudgeth the world aright, so that no man can escape his hands without punishment, he moderateth and compasseth his iudgements in such sort, that he winketh at many lewde turnes which the wicked commit, as though he sawe them not, and in the meane season correcteth his childezen as sone as they make a fault, and the reason is, because hee hath a care of them to bring them into the right way, purposing to make his prouidence especially knowen in y^e gouernment of his Church, and so vseth his arme towarde it, that by the way he giueth vs to vnderstande, he hath a fatherly care of vs, and prouideth for the saluation of his Church.

And truely if amongst men there be no father, of sounde and right iudgement, but will chastice his childezen, because without correctiō, he is not able to bring them to any good point: howe shall God, who is a most gracious & wise Father, forslacke a remedie that is so necessarie? Which notwithstanding

Of the excellencie

he vseth in such sort, that whereas he punisheth & iudgeth the world, and sheweth himselfe a seuerer & angrie iudge against the forward, he sheweth him self gracious & gentle towardes his. For by this meanes, hee meaneth to giue all men some litle taste of that which he wil shew plainly in the latter day, to wit, that he is the iudge of the world, & loueth iustice in deede, and hateth vniustice deadly, both to make the vnbeleuers so much y more inexcusable, and also for the great profit and commoditie of the faithfull, to whom he protesteth, that he doeth not punish them for any hatred he beareth them, but contrariwise because he loueth them, to amende them by afflictions which are the fruites of sinne, and cause them to runne more feruently to his grace, hauing once felt in the crosse what the anger of God is, so that whereas the wicked are ouerwhelmed with the fearful torments which they suffer, y Christian by being made partaker of the sanctification of Christ, thorowe the crosse, hath an entrance into y ioyes of heauen, and euerlasting life with him.

The profe
of a Christi-
an by the
Crosse.

And by this way it is, that God wil proue euerie mans faith, whether it be buylt vpon a sure rocke or no, whether the seede of y word be fallen vpon good ground, and whether the doctrine

of a Christian man.

doctrine of the Gospel which men haue received, be golde, siluer, and precious stones, or whether it be hay & stubble, which the fire of tribulation consumeth and bringeth to naught. If or if we make so great accompt of golde which is but a metal, that we will trye it in the fyre, to make it please vs the better, what maruell is there, if God trye the fayth of his childezen after the same sort, to the end that when we are once well purged from the dregges and filthe of incredulitie which remaineth in vs, and are purified in the furnace of diuers afflictions, and so melted as it were anew, our faith may be of like accompt before him.

And surely it wil be as easie to knowe a Christian from an hypocrite by this tryall of affliction, as it is to know a piece of gold from a piece of brasse, when they come both to the anuile, and to be stricken with the hāmer: for brasse will not be handled, but when it cometh to the beating, it breaketh, and maketh a sharpe dinne and ykelosome: and gold soundeth sweetely, & is plyable, you may stretch it out both in length and breadth in thinne and fine leaues as you list: even so when an hypocrite cometh betweene the anuile & the hammer of affliction, he brasteth with impatience,

H iiii.

Of the excellencie

The crosse
discoureth
y^e false
Christian.

The pro-
fite of the
crosse.

tience, he murmureth, cryeth out, and lamenteth in blasphemies against God: whereas y^e Christian praiseth God, giueth him thanks, and layeth out his heart, submitting him selfe willingly vnder the Lords hand that striketh him. Againe, by this exercise, God exerciseth the faithfull to contemne this life, & stirreth them vp, to thinke vpon and desire the life to come, by drawing them away by litle & litle, from the foolish and immoderate loue of this world, daseled with a vayne shew of fleshly & transitorie things: and mozeouer to ioyne them together with his sonne in y^e fellowship of the crosse, that as he passed through a bottomlesse pit of miseries to enter into heauēly glorie, so should they also come thither by diuers tribulations, herein honouring them in making them suffer persecution for righteousness sake, that is to say, for the defense of his trueth against the lyēs of Satan, or to mainteine all iust causes, that they may be in like sort renowned as his sonne was here in this worlde, and through more sufferance of miseries wherein hee maketh his gifts and graces appeare which he bestowed vpon the, be so much the more confirmed in that fellowship which they haue with him, to the ende they may be notorious for his glorie, and profit of

of a Christian man.

fit of his Church, which is by this meanes obediently gouerned.

But the chiefeſt thing that is to be conſidered in this point, & is in deede the choyleſt The excellencie of a Christian man appeareth vnder the croſſe. piece of Excellencie that is to be founde in a Christian y^e ſuffreth for Chriſtes ſake, is this, that where al men are naturally afrayd, & are ſad and penſiue when any aduerſities befall them, murmure againſt God, curſe their life, and ſal out to bāning againſt heauen & earth, deteſting their ſtate as miſerable, the Chriſtian very quietly & contentedly beareth patiently whatſoener befallerh him, not that he is ſo voyd of ſenſe, that he feeleth no grief, or affliction were not ſharpe & yrkſome to him, and very hard to beare, (for if it were otherwiſe, how could he be patient if he feele nothing) but becauſe the croſſe of Chriſt hath this propertie, that being accompanied with the vertue of y^e holy Ghoſt, which ſweeteneth the ſharpenes & bitterneſs of all afflictions, it engendrerh peace and meekeneſs in the heart of the Chriſtian, and alſo thankes giuing, for a ſingular benefit receiued of God, & cauſerh him euen in the middes of the greateſt calamities & griefs that may come vpon him, to haue a ioyful and mery heart, and receiue the for an eſpeciall cauſe of comfort. So y^e theſe two

Of the excellencie

two affections, which are ioye and sadnes, great enemies the one to the other, come and meet so together, that the one is constrained to giue place to the other, as the stronger & hauing the vpper hande: in so much that the ioy of the spirit which is incomprehensible, & as S. Paul saith, inexplicable, in that that it proceedeth from a taste of heauenly giftes, doeth in fine swalowe vp as it were y sadnes and heauines. On the cōtrarie side, they that haue no taste of those giftes, can not chuse but at length be oppressed with sadnes, when aduersitie assaileth them, for so much as the sweete & louing yoke of Christ is to heauy a burden for them, because they can not cōprehende, how God our most louing and mercifull Father giueth them power to suffer that which they do suffer, to bring them to his blisse, whereas the Christian mounteth vp on high, and passeth the very heauens, & holdeth him self quiet and glad for the blisse of the inheritance to come, as though he had it in his bosome, committing him selfe for the rest to Gods direction & gouernement, as in deede it belongeth to the Father, who is of right aboue all fathers. And so not measuring the punishments after the iudgemēt of the flesh, but giuing honour to God, he acknowledge
that

of a Christian man.

that he moderateth his punishmēts both discretely & wisely, so that there can be nothing found in them, but very good moderation, & such measure, that though through weaknes of reason he be not alwayes able to comprehend it, yet he hath sufficient to comfort himselfe, in that he knoweth that Gods iudgements are most iust and righteous.

To be short, euen as a man that passeth through a strong floud or streame on foote, least he stumbe and fall downe, setteth his eye steadily vpon the firme lande which hee mindeth to attaine vnto, and marketh not the swift course of the water, and so goeth ouer safely and is nothing dismayed: so this man passing through the raging waues of present troubles, turneth away his sight, his thought, and al apprehension that he might otherwise haue of the miserie of them, and lifting vp his eyes to heauen, beholdeth there with a spirituall regarde the inestimable treasures of the heauenly inheritance, which he striveth to attaine vnto, & by this meanes easely surmounteth all horrour and feare of torments and griefes which commonly make alterations in mens heads, & casteth them hedlong into desperation. So then he standeth surely settled, & marcheth on without feare, & not so
only

A fit comparison of the Christian passing thorough the miseries of this world

Of the excellencie

The glo-
rie of a
Christian
in; Crosse.

only but leapeth for ioy, & reioyceth in his tribulations, & glorieth in the crosse, which the world accompteth shamefull & infamous, as in a thing which he esteemeth most precious and honourable, and more full of maiestie then all the crownes and scepters, proude pompes and triumphes of all the Kings in the world, which the world wondereth at: for he casteth his eyes vpon Iesus Christe, and beholdeth in him the glorie of his sufferāces, whereby hee seeth him selfe glorified with him, and the reproche that commeth by him to become nothing. And in deede, who is he that will accompt that thing ignominious which is holy, yea and sanctified of God? Or who would despise that, whereby the children of God are prepared to glorie, which is so farre from being diminished in a Christian, through the contemptible state of this present life, that it is rather augmented: And Moses for this cause thought the reproches which he suffered for Christes sake, greater riches, then all the treasures of Egypt.

The crosse
of Anti-
christ.

The crosse of Antichrist and of his members hath nothing like, it is harde, grievous and shameful to beare. For in that they seeke not to be iustified by Christe, they labour in vaine by going about to iustifie them selues;
and

of a Christian man.

and shewe them selues to be enemies to the crosse of Christ, struiuing to beare the mortification of the crosse by many foolish inuentions, and withdrawing them selues into desert and inclosed places, vnprofitably punishing their bodie without faith, without Christ, without hope, and without charitie.

Thus the Christian man findeth combes of hony in the Lyons belly, that is to saye, ioye, gladnes and glozie, in the deepest and greatest miseries that may be, and a quiet state in the gulse of tempestes, as if he were in full blisse, and already raysed vp from death to life, and set in the heauenly places with Iesus Christ, in whom he possesseth euen from this instant euerlasting glozie and blisse, and obteineth victorie against the rage of Satā, and all the force the world is able to vse: for to him it is giuen, to treade the Lyons vnder foote, and also the dragons, and all other hurtful power, because he marcheth vnder the enseigne of this valiant captaine which wil neuer lose any one of his, though he employ the and exercise them in continuall combats, giuing them this proprietic, that who so continueth stedfast and constant in attaining to the glozie of his hope, shall in the end obteine a good and blessed ende, where as the man

The excellencie of a Christian in afflictio
that

Of the excellencie

that is afraid to make head and set him selfe courageously against all that exalteth it selfe as enemy against God, is not able to say that he hath a true hope in him.

And though the trueth be so, that there is not a weaker creature in the world then man is, subiect to the world, the flesh, & the deuill, and all his lustes, (though he had all the wisdom of the Grecians, & strength of the Romanes, and vertue of the Philosophers, and righteousnes of the Jewes in him) alwayes in feare, care, and horrour, and one that cā not resist the least tentation that may befall him: For he is but a shadow of vanitie, yea & vanitie it self: yet notwithstanding being regenerate in Iesus Christ, he is so strong & mightie, that though he cast of all worldly helpe & fauour, as Dauid put of his armour when he went to fight against Goliath, he doeth not only resist all assaults of the world, flesh, & the deuill valiantly, but also surmounteth all the enemies of God by the vertue of faith, which causeth vs to see by her light y all creatures are but fantasies and vaine fearebables, which haue no power, but as pleaseth God to giue them, whom we acknowledge to be our Father, & one that hath such a singular & fatherly care of vs, that he maketh all things serue to our

of a Christian man.

to our saluation : euen so much that this man being transformed into God by loue which suffreth all things , can no more be ouercome then God him selfe, being sure in danger , at quiet in torment, in pouertie riche, in sicknes whole, quiet in persecution, glorious in ignominie , blessed in miserie , aliue in death, and therefore victorious and triumphant ouer al his enemies : for hee that is borne of God, saith S.Iohn,ouercommeth the world.

Hereby we may gather, howe falsely they brag & boast of them selues y they are Christians, which wil needes be exempt from this conditiō of the Christians, as though it were possible to lay such hold vpon Iesus Christ as we ought, that we might embrace him, & let his crosse go : & as though we might be members of his bodie, and not be partakers of his sufferances, which is but a mere & vaine imaginatiō sprung from hence , that we do not so rightly iudge of the benefit of adoption as we ought to do, but cast away y grace, which sanctifieth vs to euerlasting life . For y trueth is so, y who so professeth him self to be a christiā and is ashamed to folowe Christ who goeth before him, doeth nothing els but cut of him self, as pou would say, & disauoweth him selfe to be any of Gods childre. For the Gospel is neuer

He that would exempt him selfe from the crosse, abuseth y name of a Christian.

Of the excellencie

neuer without persecution; neither is there any waye to come to the kingdome of heauen, but by the crosse, though a mā would neuer so much flatter and excuse him self, vnder a colour of weakenes, which is nothing els, to speake as the trueth is in deede, but infidelitie, and a smal accompt that man maketh of the holy and sacred name of the Sonne of God. For certain it is that faith shal alwayes ouercome the world, but that can not be done without fight. And he that for feare to confesse Gods Name openly, alleageth for him selfe, that yet notwithstanding God seeth his heart, sayeth trew, because he can see nothing in him but infidelitie and hypocrisie, hauing nothing, to say the trueth, to turne him away from Christ, but onely because he appeareth with his crosse, disfigured and contemptible, and subiect to the reproches of this worlde, & calleth vs to be partakers of his afflictions. So that this kinde of men preferreth the glorie of this worlde, before the glorie & maiestie of Christ which is spirituall, and the ease and quietnes of this life before euerlasting blisse: playing therein the part of Esops cocke, which found a riche & precious pearle, and forsooke it for a graine of corne, so vile and abiect and base their heart is, voyde of all
noble=

of a Christian man.

noblenes and courage of a Christian heart: which surmounteth all visible things, as one of the household of God, yea his childe & heire, being assured that there is a better possession in heauen, then that which men seeke here vpon earth. But seeing the world is so brutishe, and full of malice and ignorance, we neede not marueile, if we see the most part of men drawe back & cowardly cast away their weapons, as soone as they see the standart of the crosse set vp, as we haue scene more exāples then were to be wished: and that of such as at the beginning seemed to be valiant soldiers, which had neuer learned to warfare & fight against their enemies but with a certaine hautines of courage, which passeth away by and by, and not to possesse their soules in patience. These and such like are the apparant markes and signes of the holy Ghost in a Christian man, and his true ornaments and beautie that hath put on Iesus Christ, whereby he may be knowen from other.

Now that we haue in this sorte spoken of **A** man is the Excellencie of this man, by marking and setting him forth in his colours, no man may thinke that **I** will take no man for a Christian, but him that hath these markes so perfectly as though hee were full of the holy

to be taken
for a Chri-
stian though
he haue not
attained to
a perfectiō.

Of the excellencie

Ghost, and renewed with such vprightnes of life, as though he wanted nothing. For if the case stode so, it were very hard to finde any such amongst men, for there hath neuer bene man yet so perfect. For when we speake of a Christian man, as of a man that is truly renewed, and made spirituall, iust and without blame, we may not thinke that the worke of this making a new creature, is a worke done in a moment, or in a day, yea or perfected all this life long: as we may not also thinke, that it is a worke which is wrought equally in al: for it is a worke which God furdereth in proces of time by litle and litle, and as it were by degrees, according to y^e measure that it pleaseth him to giue to eche of vs, untill he haue brought it to perfection.

The worke of regeneration is not perfected in one day.

Howe a Christian mā is said to be spirituall and righteous.

So that the spirit of God which is giuen to a Christian, doeth so abolishe the corruptiō of the flesh, that there remaine notwithstanding euen to death certaine reliques of the old man, but yet so that the holy Ghost in the end getteth y^e vpper hand: For it can not be, but he is the strongest wheresoeuer he is, and by the efficacie of his mouing, he holdeth mē necessarily in stedy and continuall obedience of Iustice, as the seede whereby he is regenerate, is incorruptible. By meanes whereof, though

though this man that is so regenerate, abideth notwithstanding in the flesh, and sinne dwelleth in him: yet according to his better part, and in respect of the spirit that in the end ruleth in him, he is called spiritual, so that though there be at this present no such perfection in the worlde, but there may be some fault found with it, notwithstanding he is already counted, as it were, inreprehensible, and without blame, who is regenerate and of a right heart tendeth to this marke. And I thought good to adde this point, to the ende that no man shoulde discourage him selfe, though he feele not a perfect regeneration & crucifying of the fleshe in him selfe, and a full and whole quickening of the spirit, but laye that before him which I spake of before, as it were a paterne whereby he hath to forme and frame his life, shooting alwayes at the perfection, as at a marke which he must alwaies leuell at, considering how smal a thing it is & of litle accompt to enter into the list of the Gospel, vnesse we labour and strue to come to the ende. For the chieftest wisdom of the best, is to draw on further, and to go on more and more, as the calling of a Christian man requireth: nay no man ought to thinke of him self that he hath profited but smally, that can

feeles in him selfe some signe & witnes of th. at
 fellowship he hath with Christ in his death, &
 resurrection through new motions of an un-
 fained heart, which striveth in deede to godli-
 nes of life. Considering that God of his free
 goodnes vouchsaureth y^e holy affection which
 he him self planteth in the heartes of his ser-
 vants this honour, that he taketh him for a
 Christian, which is not so as yet properly: for
 mā can not come to this happines in this life
 to be cleane from all sinne, and to haue a ful-
 nes of faith & pure charitie. And in that that
 a man is taken to be a Christian, it is by rea-
 son of the newnes of life that is begonne in
 him through the vertue of the holy Ghost, y^e
 by his vertue quickeneth him, vntil he be per-
 fectly renewed: which cā not be done before
 the tyme that we shall haue put of the morta-
 litie of these our bodies, and therewithall, the
 filth of sinne.

An admonition to euery one, that he should well examine him selfe whether he be truly a Christian.

And therefore let a man examine his life, &
 soe his heart to the depth, to know whether
 he finde the markes of a Christian there or
 no: and in case he do finde them there, let him
 be as thankesful to God as if he had receiued
 the greatest benefit in the worlde, being assu-
 red that his name is written in heauen. And
 therefore let him with S. Iohn skip for ioye, &
 crie

crie out with Elizabeth , and enlarge his
 tongue with Zacharie, and magnifie the Lord
 with the virgin Marie, for that it hath pleased
 him to cast vpon him , being but a worme of
 the earth, the eyes of his great mercy , to
 make him taste such high things , so rich and
 secret to the sense of man, that there is no eye
 can see them, no eare can heare the, nor heart
 and vnderstanding that can comprehend the.
 And let that man know, that this secret was
 giuen him, to the end he should keepe this so
 great a benefit vnto death , by encreasing the
 same faith, wherby he was receiued to be par-
 taker of this benefit : for it is the ende of a
 Christian mans calling to go on more and
 more in obedience to Godward, and to strue
 without ceasing to drawe euery daye more
 nere the other to him , regarding on the one
 side the goodnes of God on them that conti-
 nue, and on the other side his seueritie on the,
 which abuse the treasure and bountifulnes of
 his grace. And if on the other side he can not
 know in him selfe that he is a Christian cho-
 sen of God, let him sobbe and sighe before his
 face, and praye to him to make him partaker
 of his light and heauenly grace, to the end he
 may be out of doubt . If he that doubteth,
 hath not as yet sufficient light in him , seeing
 the

the efficacie of the witnes of Gods spirit is
 so cleare and certaine in his heart in whom he
 is, that as touching that point, there is no
 doubt. But we may well say that that man is
 That man is very blind that can not per-
 suade him self he is a Christian.
 blinde, peruerse, and miserable, that can not
 perswade him selfe so much of the goodnes,
 mightie power and trueth of God, as to be-
 leue his promises which he hath made, and
 sworne, and pronounced so solemnely. And
 therefore let euerie man strue with him selfe
 to make his election sure through a good cō-
 sciēce, and synceritie of life answerable to the
 profession of his faith, and labour by all
 meanes possible, that the worlde
 may know in deede that it is
 not in vaine that he per-
 suadeth himselfe, he
 is a Christian.

(.♦.)

FINIS.

